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FBIS-NES-93-238 CONTENTS *14 December 1993*

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

India's Singh Urges Restoring G-15 'Credibility' *[Delhi Radio]* 1
Zimbabwe's Mugabe Arrives for New Delhi Meeting *[Delhi Radio]* 1
    Rao, Mahathir, Mugabe Hold Meeting *[ISI]* 1
Christopher Failure To Visit Lebanon 'Moral Blow' *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Dec]* 1

Arab-Israeli Talks

Talks Said To Continue at 'Arafat-Rabin Level *[MENA]* 2
Israel Said To Agree on Passport Post, Airport *[VOM]* 2
Jordan, Israel To Sign Accord on Banks in Gaza *[AL-RA'Y 12 Dec]* 2
    Jordan Initials Economic Accord *[AL-DUSTUR 13 Dec]* 3

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Addresses European Parliament 13 Dec *[Algiers VOP]* 3
'Arafat Seeks U.S. Help To Resume Gulf Aid *[AL-NAHAR 10 Dec]* 6
Christopher Seeks Easing of Pressure on 'Arafat *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 13 Dec]* 6
Quray' Views Delayed Implementation of Accord *[Jerusalem International]* 7
'Abd-al-Shafi Reacts to Implementation Delay *[Jerusalem International]* 7
Rabin 'Playing With Fire' by Withdrawal Delay *[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 13 Dec]* 8
Cairo Meeting Results Show Palestinian Firmness *[Baghdad VOP]* 9
'Ashrawi Denies Resignation Due To PLO Conflict *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 11 Dec]* 9
PLO's al-Najjab on Draft Constitutional System *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 9 Dec]* 10
Draft Constitution Distributed for Discussion *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Dec]* 10
PLO May Halt Talks if 'Arafat-Rabin Summit Fails *[AL-DUSTUR 14 Dec]* 11
Ten Factions Denounce Accord, Iraqi Embargo *[Baghdad Radio]* 12
PFLP Leader on Dislike of Gaza-Jericho Accord *[Vienna DER STANDARD 14 Dec]* 12
DFLP Leader Hawatimah Urges 'Global' Peace Plan *[Brussels LE SOIR 9 Dec]* 12
DFLP Denounces U.S. Stance on Jerusalem *[SANA]* 13
DFLP Calls for Elections in Gaza, West Bank *[SANA]* 13
Effort To Build Independent State Praised *[Baghdad VOP]* 14
Commentary Says Intifadah 'Do-or-Die' Conflict *[Baghdad VOP]* 14
National Unity Urged at Current 'Critical Stage' *[Baghdad VOP]* 14
Police Commander Queried on Role of New Force *[AFP]* 14
Russian Envoy Hands Message to 'Arafat *[Algiers VOP]* 15
Deportees Flee Camp Fearing Arrest by Israelis *[Beirut Radio]* 15

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Government Starts Talks With IMF on Debt *[Algiers TV]* 16
VAT Reduced; Social Allowances To Be Increased *[Algiers TV]* 16
Party Uncertain Over Participation in Dialogue *[Algiers Radio]* 16
Ali Kafi Receives Tunisian Justice Minister *[Algiers TV]* 16

Egypt

Bosnian Vice President Ganic Arrives in Cairo *[Cairo Radio]* 16
    Meets Mubarak, Comments *[MENA]* 17

Editorial Questions U.S. Position on Jerusalem *[MENA]* 17
U.S. Action To Stop Spread of Nuclear Arms Viewed *[AL-AKHBAR 6 Dec]* 17
Parties Back Libya, Boycott U.S. Products *[AL-AHRAR 6 Dec]* 18
Musa Returns From India, Views G-15 Conference *[Cairo Radio]* 18
IMF Representative Comments on Debt *[MENA]* 18
Chief of Staff Leaves for Germany, Greece *[MENA]* 18
'Fugitive Terrorist' Killed in Upper Egypt *[MENA]* 19
New Policy on States Backing 'Terrorists' Urged *[MENA]* 19
Correspondent Denies Journalists Harassed *[MENA]* 19
'AQIDATI Compares Paper to ROSE AL-YUSUF *[7 Dec]* 19
Minister on Military Industries' Production *[MENA]* 20
Study Shows Increase in Debt, Treasury Bills *[MENA]* 20
Petroleum, Gas Sales Figures Reported *[MENA]* 20

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Interviewed on U.S., Other Issues *[London AL-MAJALLAH 5 Dec]* 20
Al-Qadhdhafi Gives Speech in Warshaffanah *[Tripoli TV]* 25
Opposition Leader Disappears in Cairo *[London MBC TV]* 25

Mauritania

President Taya Begins Official Visit to France *[Nouakchott Radio]* 25
Taya Receives Message From Tunisian President *[Nouakchott Radio]* 26
Malian Tuareg Leader Visits, Views Coup Plot *[Libreville Radio]* 26

Morocco

Israeli National Bank Chief Pays Visit *[MAP]* 26
Niger President Arrives in Rabat on Visit *[Niamey Radio]* 27
  Hassan Meets Congo, Niger Presidents *[Rabat TV]* 27
PPS Paper Condemns Libyan Remarks Against West *[MAP]* 27

Sudan

Tribunal Established To Try Former General *[Omdurman Radio]* 28
UN Criticized Over Human Rights Resolution *[SUNA]* 28
Egyptian Envoy Explains Absence at UN Vote *[SUNA]* 28
Vice President Reaffirms Support for Iraq *[INA]* 28
Government Reaches Aviation Agreement With Oman *[Omdurman Radio]* 28
Parliament Discusses Steps To Improve Security *[Omdurman Radio]* 29

Western Sahara

Polisario Warns Rally Organizers of 'Dangers' *[Algiers Radio]* 29

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Kuwait

20 Kuwaitis To Be Reunited With Families 15 Dec *[KUNA]* 30
Kenyan President Moi Arrives for Visit *[Nairobi Radio]* 30
  Official Talks Begin *[Kuwait Radio]* 30
Opening of 'New Pages' With 'Enemies' Opposed *[KUNA]* 30

Qatar

OPEC Chief: Extraordinary Meeting Not Necessary *[AFP]* 30

United Arab Emirates

Yemeni Foreign Minister Arrives on 1-Day Visit *[WAKH]* 31
Bosnian Prime Minister Arrives in Dubayy *[WAKH]* 31
  Urges Gulf Mediation To Pressure Serbs *[AFP]* 31
  Ends Talks, Departs 12 Dec *[WAKH]* 32

Yemen

Salih Said To Welcome al-Bid's '18 Points' *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 11 Dec]* 32
YSP Statement Paves Way for Al-Bid, Salih Meeting *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Dec]* 32
YSP, GPC Form Committees for Dialogue on Crisis *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 13 Dec]* 33
Ex-President Presents Plans To Resolve Crisis *[London AL-HAYAH 13 Dec]* 33
Hadhramaut Seeks End to Excessive Centralism *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 10 Dec]* 34

IRAQ

'Aziz Receives French Parliamentary Delegation *[Baghdad Radio]* 35
  Saddam Orders Release of French Prisoner *[INA]* 35
  Assembly Speaker Urges Normal Ties *[Baghdad Radio]* 35
Foreign Minister Receives German Delegation *[Baghdad Radio]* 35
  German Due To Be Freed 'Tuesday' *[AFP]* 35
Dissidents: Saddam Creates 'New Inner Circle' *[Brussels LE SOIR 14 Dec]* 36
Al Basrah on Alert Against Mujahidin Actions *[IRNA]* 36
'Agent' Actions Affect Electricity in North *[Baghdad Radio]* 37
Opposition Radio Views Sudan Islamic Conference *[Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution]* 37
Popular Forces Chief Urges Aid for Intifadah *[INA]* 37
President's Son 'Udayy Attends Cabinet Session *[Baghdad Radio]* 38
Airspace 'Violations' 1-9 Dec Reported 38
  'Violations' 4-6 Dec *[INA]* 38
  'Violations' 8, 9 Dec *[INA]* 38
  'Violations' Protested to UN *[Baghdad Radio]* 38
Completion of Bridge in Baghdad Announced *[INA]* 38

ISRAEL

Rabin Rejects Return to Pre-1967 Borders *[Jerusalem Radio]* 39
Peres: No Room To Reopen PLO Agreement *[Jerusalem Radio]* 39
Accord 'Void' if Palestinian State Declared *[Jerusalem Radio, etc]* 39
Beilin Sees Withdrawal in 'Two Weeks or So' *[Tokyo KYODO]* 40
Rabin, 'Arafat Said To Share Common Destiny *[HA'ARETZ 14 Dec]* 40
Rabin on IDF Mobilization, Increased Security *[Jerusalem Radio]* 41
Chief of Staff Views Situation in Territories *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 10 Dec]* 42
'Terrorist' Killed, Police Injured in Shoot-Out 44
  'Accomplice' Flees Scene *[Jerusalem Radio]* 44
  Security Forces Detonate Car Bomb *[Jerusalem Radio]* 44
  Fugitive 'Terrorist' Captured *[Jerusalem Radio]* 45
IDF Prevents Settlers From Setting Up Trailers *[Jerusalem Radio]* 45
Jewish Agency Plans To Move Territories' Settlers *[Jerusalem Radio]* 45
  Settlement Plan for Territories Denied *[Jerusalem Radio]* 45
Human Rights Violations in Territories Reported *[HA'ARETZ 10 Dec]* 45
Continued Waning Support for Agreement Seen *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 13 Dec]* 46
Support for National Unity Government Reported *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 14 Dec]* 46
Jericho Strike To Protest Delayed Implementation *[Jerusalem Radio]* 47
New Weekly Begins Publication 10 Dec *[Jerusalem TV]* 47
Paper on Impending Gas Deals With Qatar, Egypt *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 10 Dec]* 47
Czech Minister Confers With Peres, Rabin 48
  Denies Arms Sales to Iran *[Jerusalem TV]* 48
  Rabin: Avoid Nuclear Sales to Iran *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 48
  Peace Process Anxiety 'Substantiated' *[Prague CTK]* 48

JORDAN

- 'Highlights' of Economic Accord With PLO Cited *[AL-RA'Y 13 Dec]* 49
    - PLO Delay in Finalizing Accord Viewed *[JORDAN TIMES 13 Dec]* 50
- Rabin Blamed for Failure of Cairo Talks *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 13 Dec]* 52
- Finance Minister Presents 1994 Draft Budget *[JORDAN TIMES 13 Dec]* 52

LEBANON

- Buwayz Comments on Peace Process, Visit to UK *[Beirut Radio]* 55
    - Comments Before Departing *[Beirut Radio]* 55
- 'Awn Alleges New Wave of Syrian Arrests *[London AL-HAYAH 10 Dec]* 56
- Junblatt Criticizes 'Clamor' Over Pope's Visit *[VOM]* 56
- Amal Detonates Device Against 'Enemy Patrol' *[Beirut Radio]* 56

SYRIA

- Iranian Vice President, Delegation Pay Visit 57
    - Habibi, Khaddam Make Statements *[Damascus Radio]* 57
    - Vice Presidents Lead Committee Meetings *[Damascus Radio]* 57
    - Topics of 13 Dec Meeting Detailed *[Tehran Radio]* 57
    - Talks Continue; Habibi Meets Nasrallah *[Tehran Radio]* 57
    - Committee Attendees, Agenda Reported *[Damascus Radio]* 58
    - Al-Asad Receives Habibi *[Damascus Radio]* 58
- Rejection of 4-Phase Withdrawal Plan Viewed *[SYRIA TIMES 7 Dec]* 58
- Press Views Upcoming al-Asad-Clinton Summit *[Damascus Radio]* 59
    - Commentary on Importance of Summit *[Damascus Radio]* 60
- Press on Need for 'Genuine and Firm Peace' *[Damascus Radio]* 60

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

- Rabbani Meets With Acting Prime Minister *[Kabul Radio]* 62
- Appointment of Acting Prime Minister Viewed *[Kabul Radio]* 62
- Attempt To Smuggle Najibollah Out of Kabul Foiled *[London AL-HAYAH 13 Dec]* 62
- Arabs Killed, Captured in Fighting Near Kabul *[London AL-HAYAH 10 Dec]* 63

Bangladesh

- Civil Servants Threaten 'Mass Resignations' *[AFP]* 63
- Official Views Problems With India *[Dhaka International]* 63

India

- Ministers Discuss Ties With U.S. Senators *[Delhi Radio]* 64
- Pakistani Failure To Find Suspects 'Regretted' *[Delhi Radio]* 64
- Indian Forces Kill 17 in Kashmir Clashes *[Islamabad TV]* 64
- Commentary on SAARC Cooperation With Other Groups *[Delhi Radio]* 64
- President Rao Addresses Defense Committee *[Delhi Radio]* 65
- Finance Minister Discusses Economic Reforms *[Delhi TV]* 65
- 41 Foreign Investment Proposals Approved *[Delhi Radio]* 65

Iran

- Raja'i-Khorasani Interviewed on Ties With U.S. *[AL-SAFIR 29 Nov]* 65
- Seyyed Hadi Khamene'i on Ties With U.S. *[JAHAN-E ESLAM 17 Nov]* 67
- Commentaries Criticize Rushdie-Clinton Meeting 70
    - Meeting Declared 'Scandal' *[RESALAT 27 Nov]* 70
    - 'Confrontation' Against Muslims Viewed *[SALAM 28 Nov]* 71
- Hamas Official on Visit, PLO-Israeli Accord *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 4 Dec]* 72

Delegation Protests Israeli Credentials at UNIDO *[IRNA]* 74
Commentary Urges Negotiations in Afghanistan *[Tehran Radio]* 74
KEYHAN Views Future of 'Arab-Afghans' *[1 Dec]* 74
Egypt's 'Anti-Iranian Propaganda' in UAE Condemned *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 2 Dec]* 75
MKO, Iraq Blamed for Killing Turkish Diplomat *[Tehran International]* 76
Besharati: MKO Disturbing Security in Turkey *[IRNA]* 76
MKO 'Member' Reveals Plans To Disrupt Paris Ties *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 23 Nov]* 76
Hashemi-Rafsanjani Meets Envoys to CIS *[Tehran TV]* 78
Iranian, Turkish Roles in Azerbaijan Viewed *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 2 Dec]* 79
Daily Calls for 'Direct' Talks in Tajikistan *[IRNA]* 79
Velayati Meets Finnish Deputy Foreign Minister *[IRNA]* 80
Paper Lauds IAEA Report on Nuclear Program *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 4 Dec]* 80
Adviser Assesses 'Alarming' Rial Situation *[IRNA]* 81
Official on Sales of Shares in Industries *[Tehran Radio]* 81
Hashemi-Rafsanjani Opens Computer Center *[IRNA]* 81
Yazdi Comments on Capital, Corporal Punishment *[IRNA]* 81
Karrubi on Resumption of Clerics Society's Activity *[KEYHAN 4 Dec]* 82

Pakistan

U.S. Senate Delegation Meets Senate Chairman *[Islamabad Radio]* 82
  Foreign Minister Meets Senators *[Islamabad International]* 82
Visit by Senators, Pressler Amendment Viewed *[THE NATION 14 Dec]* 82
U.S. Diplomacy Deemed 'Irrelevant' *[THE MUSLIM 11 Dec]* 83
Status of Textile Industry, U.S. Talks Viewed *[THE NATION 11 Dec]* 84
  U.S. Urged To Review Trade Stance *[KHABRAIN 12 Dec]* 84
Minister Claims Turkey To Help With U.S. Ties *[Islamabad Radio]* 85
Minister Reviews Bhutto's Visit to Turkey, Iran *[Islamabad Radio]* 85
  Iranian Mediation on Kashmir Accepted *[Islamabad International]* 85
Border Trade With PRC To Be Increased *[Islamabad Radio]* 86
Bhutto Gives Condolences After 'Terrorist' Attack *[Islamabad Radio]* 86
Bhutto Family Feud, PPP Split Detailed *[DAWN 12 Dec]* 86
Budget Figures, Economic Data Reported *[THE NEWS 12 Dec]* 87
Army Conducts Exercise in Punjab *[Islamabad TV]* 88

Sri Lanka

Differences Between General, Government Increase *[AFP]* 88
Editorial on Need To Resolve Ethnic Conflict *[VIRAKESARI 26 Nov]* 89

India's Singh Urges Restoring G-15 'Credibility'

BK1112092493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] India has called for restoring the credibility of G-15 [Group of 15]. The external affairs minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh, said this is necessary for the success of South-South cooperation, as also the dialogue with the developed world.

Addressing the meeting of G-15 foreign ministers in New Delhi today, he said India has offered to reschedule the postponed fourth G-15 summit to the second half of March. Setting the trend for the deliberations of the meeting, Mr. Dinesh Singh said the developing countries must express strongly against new discriminatory barriers in the form of environment and labor practices. These can frustrate trade-oriented economic reforms program in the developing countries. The external affairs minister said the G-15 must coordinate the stand on this issue. Terming terrorism as the greatest threat to human rights, the external affairs minister said the international community should focus greater attention on this problem, particularly on the threat posed by the terrorist menace when aided and abetted from across national borders.

Zimbabwe's Mugabe Arrives for New Delhi Meeting

BK1312081493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0630 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] The president of Zimbabwe, Mr. Robert Mugabe, has said the reinforcement of G-15 will be the high point of his discussions in the Indian capital. Speaking to newspersons soon after his arrival in New Delhi this morning, Mr. Mugabe said that he and other heads of countries present in Delhi will have consultations on revitalizing the G-15 and further strengthening South-South cooperation. He said that they will also be discussing ways to increase interaction with the developed countries with regard to trade specially in the light of GATT talks, the results of which he said are being anxiously awaited by the developing countries. He said, his country would like to increase its volume of trade with India and further strengthen technical and cultural relations.

Earlier, the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao received the Zimbabwean president at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House].

The Malaysian prime minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, who was also given a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan this morning said that he will have consultations on the G-15. Speaking to newsmen in New Delhi this morning, Dr. Mahathir said that he will have general discussions with Indian leaders on bilateral cooperation.

Earlier, the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao; the minister of state for external affairs; and the railway minister, Mr. Jaffar Shariff formally received the Malaysian prime minister at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Rao, Mahathir, Mugabe Hold Meeting

BK1312152993 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1443 GMT 13 Dec 93

["Official Spokesman's Statement on the Informal Meeting Between the Malaysian Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, and our Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, and Dr. Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe in New Delhi on 13 December 1993"]

[Text] Today, the prime minister of Malaysia H.E. Dr. Mahathir Mohamed had an informal meeting with our prime minister. The G-15 foreign ministers and personal representatives (PRS) were also present in the meeting. They stressed the importance of the role of the G-15 group of countries in terms of South-South cooperation and also its role as a bridge between the North and the South. They focussed on the various projects being implemented by the G-15 and emphasized that all countries in the group should participate in them. They expressed satisfaction at the fact that the full range of preparatory work had been gone through at PRS and the ministerial level, even though the summit itself had to be postponed. They reviewed the report on the projects and other issues of the PRS. On the draft communique prepared by the PRS, they felt that it would need to be updated just before the summit keeping in mind contemporary political and economic developments. The summit would be held some time between the last week of March and the first week of April 1994.

The leaders also touched on international issues including UN peace keeping operations, human rights and issues of development. Bilateral level talks were also held with the Zimbabwean delegation, with an introductory meeting with the PM [prime minister], followed by delegation-level talks. The areas expected to figure in the talks are cooperation in small-scale industries, especially in connection with rural development, cooperation in the transport sector, the telecommunication sectors, including training and consultancy services, and finally the power sector.

Christopher Failure To Visit Lebanon 'Moral Blow'

PM1412110193 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Rashid Khashanah report: "Christopher: 'Arafat-Rabin Meeting Very Important'"]

[Excerpts] Tunis, Beirut, occupied Jerusalem, AL-HAYAH—U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday attached exceptional importance to the meeting expected to take place between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister

Yitzhaq Rabin to tackle the points of disagreement over implementation of the self-rule agreement. [passage omitted]

In Beirut, ministerial sources have told AL-HAYAH that Christopher did not raise the issue of a visit to Lebanon during his communication with Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, nor did the latter ask him about it. The sources said that what the U.S. secretary had announced "is evidence that major progress has been made with regard to preparations for the negotiations." They believe that his talks in Damascus "reached an agreement dealing mainly with the Syrian track and which positively affects the Lebanese track." The sources said that the aim of the U.S.-Syrian summit "will be to perpetuate this agreement and to discuss the regional situation and peace prospects."

Western diplomatic sources in Beirut have told AL-HAYAH that the Syrian-U.S. talks went beyond talk of endorsing the principle of a full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan Heights and moved on to the plan and timetable for a withdrawal, specifically its duration, inasmuch as Damascus has requested that the period be reduced to a two- to three-year period. The sources revealed that the Israeli withdrawal will be conducted in stages under U.S. guarantees, provided this coincide with Syria's proposal of an overall view of the way to achieve a comprehensive peace.

Ministerial sources have said that Christopher's failure to visit Lebanon represents a "moral blow," not only because it means U.S. contempt for Lebanon's position in a peace settlement and for the southern issue in particular, but because it is another example of Washington's disregard for resolution 425 in its preparation of the draft resolution to be adopted by the UN General Assembly.

These sources believe that the U.S. understanding of the existing strong coordination between Lebanon and Syria, namely that the Lebanese position is annexed to the Syrian position, contradicts the need to discuss important details and issues on the Lebanese track of the regional peace negotiations. The sources believe that this disregard for Lebanon harms peace orientations, because it does not help unravel the existing knots, nor is it compatible with the country's interests. [passage omitted]

Arab-Israeli Talks

Talks Said To Continue at 'Arafat-Rabin Level

NC1312114093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1113 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (MENA)—MENA has learned that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin decided during their meeting in Cairo yesterday to continue negotiations on the leadership level [mustawa ri'asiy] through unofficial channels.

MENA has also learned that Jacques Neriya, the political adviser to the Israeli prime minister, who paid a three-day visit to Tunis last week to prepare for the 'Arafat-Rabin meeting, will be in charge of the negotiations with the Palestinian leadership in Tunis, which will be held before the second Palestinian-Israeli summit scheduled for Cairo on 22 December.

The Economic Committee and the Authority Transfer Committee will continue their meetings in Paris and al-'Arish today while the subcommittee and the Security Committee, which used to meet in Cairo, have been eliminated.

Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal stressed in a statement to MENA that the Palestinian and Israeli sides are committed to implementing the Gaza-Jericho First agreement, a commitment that was decisively shown during the 'Arafat-Rabin talks in Cairo yesterday.

He said Palestinian President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin will come to Cairo and won't leave until they reach an agreement, even if this means negotiating for over one day.

MENA has learned that in view of the situation in the occupied territories and the disappointment and despair that are appearing, the Israeli side intends to make several goodwill gestures represented by the release of 2,200 Palestinian detainees soon.

Israel Said To Agree on Passport Post, Airport

NC1312111193 Shamanah Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1000 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Citing Egyptian sources, AL-HAYAH reports that Egyptian President Husni Mubarak discussed specific formulas on disputed issues with 'Arafat and Rabin. The paper says the Israeli side agreed to set up a Palestinian passport post on the borders with Egypt and Jordan and that passports would be stamped with an emblem of national authority. The Israeli side also agreed to build a small airport in Gaza to receive small aircraft, but not to be used militarily, plus a wave band for Palestinian radio and television to start trial transmission in a few weeks.

Jordan, Israel To Sign Accord on Banks in Gaza

JN1212115993 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 12 Dec 93 p 25

[By Caroline Faraj]

[Excerpt] An informed source has told AL-RA'Y that pursuant to the talks that were held in Washington on 30 November within the framework of the tripartite U.S.-Jordanian-Israeli committee for economic development, another agreement of understanding will be signed within the next few days to open branches of Jordanian banks in the Gaza Strip. The agreement will be similar to the one that was initialed earlier to reopen branches in the West Bank.

The source added that to become effective, the agreement of understanding that was initialed by Jordan and Israel in Washington on 1 December needs to be officially endorsed by the governments of both countries.

The source explained that in accordance with the agreement of understanding concerning Jordanian banks in the West Bank, previous branches will be reopened and new branches will be opened after an official license from the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] is obtained and in accordance with relevant CBJ valid laws.

The source indicated that Jordan did not have any banks in the Gaza Strip. Consequently, the new agreement will allow Jordanian banks to operate there. [passage omitted]

Jordan Initials Economic Accord

JN1312101893 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 13 Dec 93 p 32

[Report by Hani al-Duwayk]

[Text] Amman—Acting Prime Minister Dr. Ma'n Abu-Nuwar has stated that Jordan has initialed an economic accord with Israel allowing Jordanian banks to open branches in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Contacted by telephone, Dr. Abu-Nuwar told AL-DUSTUR that the accord will shortly be presented to the cabinet for discussion before it can be approved. He said the aim of the accord is to protect the Jordanian dinar and help our people there run their financial and economic affairs.

It is noteworthy that some Jordanian banks had asked the Central Bank for permission to open branches in the West Bank and Gaza. The Housing Bank plans to open eight branches in Nabulus, Janin, Hebron, Jerusalem, Tulkarm, Ramallah, Jericho, and Gaza.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Addresses European Parliament 13 Dec

LD1312221693 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Address by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 13 December—read by announcer]

[Text] Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, members of the European Parliament: First of all, I would like to express my pleasure to meet you and thank you for the opportunity you have given me to talk before this assembly.

In the name of our Palestinian people, on behalf of my brothers, members of the PLO Executive Committee, and in the name of the Palestinian national authority, I would like to express to you our sincere thanks and appreciation for the decisions on the Palestinian cause made by your honorable parliament, siding with the just struggle waged by our Palestinian people for achieving just peace in the land of peace, the land of blessed Palestine.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: It is not, of course, accidental that I am delivering this speech today, 13 December, since it represents the first day of the implementation of the first step in the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, which enjoyed your complete support. The implementation of the agreement is supposed to start today. Yesterday, I met with Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, under the auspices of President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, and we discussed this issue in detail and agreed to meet once again after 10 days in Egypt to continue this search, including the discussion of the points on which no agreement has been reached. At the same time, the committees in Paris and Egypt continue to pursue their work with our joint commitment to this agreement.

We achieved an extremely important step on the path to comprehensive peace in our region by signing the Declaration of Principles agreement with Israel. We also paved the way for a new era, dependent on negotiations instead of war, on cohabitation instead of expansion and occupation—a new era that opens the most welcoming of doors for development and prosperity.

The 13 September agreement marks the beginning of the lifting of a historical injustice that was committed against our people, the start of correcting a serious flaw that excluded our people and deprived them of their rights to freedom and independence.

We see in that agreement a necessary start to achieve the courageous peace that we have repeatedly called for—one of these calls was in this city five years ago—and since we proposed the Palestinian peace project, we believe that translating the agreement into a practical down-to-earth method, strengthening it and protecting it has become the most urgent task for us and the world.

From here arises one of the pillars of Europe's role, as we see it, demand it, and expect it. Europe, Mr. President, was a fundamental partner in the conclusion of the peace agreement. The European position stressed the indispensable prerequisites to achieve peace in our region. The European Parliament has always had unchanging positions. We do not forget and will not forget your stands, your defense of our people during the first years of the intifadah. We will not forget your positions that were dedicated to dealing in a practical manner with our occupied territory as a separate entity from the occupation.

Your council and various European agencies always stressed the fundamental conditions. You always stressed the necessity to meet our people's rights. You always stressed the necessity to implement resolutions on international legitimacy and the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

And this is exactly what was achieved with the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Such a European stance was as much a reflection of a noble commitment to the values of freedom and justice as it was an expression of farsightedness and wisdom as well as understanding for the essence of the dispute and courage to take the right stance.

I would like here to laud, in particular, all those decisions that you have made to bolster our peoples' right to self determination, including their right to set up an independent state. Also, I would like here to hail your respected parliament's decision to encourage Palestinian imports to Europe since 1986 and following up such a decision with the necessary measures to faciliate such imports.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: I said earlier that the peace plane took off with the signing of the agreement on 13 September; our task now is to make it fly higher and to provide it with everything necessary to allow it to reach its destination, as well as to provide it with necessary runways for its safe landing for the sake of a just and comprehensive peace in our region.

Several problems have occurred and a number of colossal difficulties have arisen before the implementation of the agreement. Of course, we were expecting a number of hurdles before our endeavor to bring about a historical process that would create new facts in a dramatic way. Nevertheless, I would like to confirm to you here that we are determined to work tirelessly as much as possible to meet the required conditions and to minutely and meticulously implement the agreement. And we are expecting the same from the Israeli Government in order to reach a just peace.

Israel's recognition of the PLO and its commitment to begin withdrawing first from Gaza and Jericho and then from all occupied Palestinian territories should proceed in the right direction, that is, the recognition of the Palestinian people's full rights.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, members of the respected European parliament: The comprehensive international support for the Palestinian-Israeli agreement has shown the international community's desire to put an end to the continuous tension in the Middle East, which has been a threat to world peace, as well as the international community's eagerness to end the state of permanent war and to find a peace that would meet the Palestinian people's national and political rights, giving our people a place under the sun, as well as a place among nations.

Furthermore, such support, which has manifested itself in various forms, is meant to show that there is an understanding that such an agreement, which has opened the doors to the search for a solution to one of this century's most complicated and sensitive problems, would constitute one of the pillars of the new world order, whose birth we have witnessed, as well as the way it is being devised. Finding a thoroughfare to a comprehensive peace in our region through negotiations needs to be coupled with justice, that is, the recognition of peoples' rights and the need to open the way for a period of development and reconstruction to overcome the catastrophic results of decades of occupation, expansion, and wars.

All this should be done in an exemplary and positive manner, particularly at this moment, when we are witnessing a world of regional wars, the widening gap between the North and the South, and the threat of famine.

Our world is in dire need, on the eve of a new century, for a fresh program that would secure the sought-after balance between the abandonment of the ideas of hegemony and exploitation and the consecration of the values of freedom, human rights, democracy, and justice, and a better management of world natural resources and its wealth, as well as the progress of human civilization, which should be used to bring about economic development and social progress for all peoples of the world.

Mr. President: The signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, which has historic importance and consists of various future possibilities, place before us all pressing and urgent tasks. Since Europe was a partner in the making of the peace agreement and in reaching it, it has the responsibility of overseeing its implementation and ensuring its success.

It is a task that is not only imposed upon it because of the role that the central European Union [EU] plays in international politics, but also because of the special relations that link us. We are neighbors joined by continuous historical inter-relationships and are pulled together by the Mediterranean Sea, around which we live. It extends the links that bring our interests and welfare closer for the future.

The first task is to implement the agreement. Any delay in its implementation will make the historical process lose much of its momentum and credibility. From this comes the pressing need for the precise and sincere implementation of the agreement to facilitate the adherence to the timetable crowded with appointments and agreed steps.

The continuing human rights' violations on our Palestinian homeland and the fascist practices by the settlers against our people contribute toward poisoning the atmosphere and placing obstacles in the face of progress.

The second task is to build the infrastructure in our homeland. Palestine is being born again, ladies and gentlemen. Throughout history, our land was the cradle of the three holy religions and a center radiating civilization in the region before the occurrence of the flagrant historical injustice on the right of our people—they were plucked from their land and scattered in refugee camps.

They were able to prove their capabilities and competence so that our country in the first decades of this century was a prominent civilized, cultural, economic, and trade center in the region.

Our people succeeded during the past five decades in achieving two miracles. The first was their ability to maintain their national identity in the diaspora and develop the capabilities of their members so that their contributions toward achieving progress in many countries in our region was an outstanding experience through which they were able attain a huge amount of expertise, capabilities, and competence.

The second was their ability to continuously build by strengthening their national identity under occupation. An example of that was the experiment of building Palestinian schools and universities in the occupied territories. Despite the harshness of the occupation, all these experiments, all these energies, and all these capabilities will be mobilized in the process of building our national entity.

The size of our dreams are exactly the size of our suffering and sacrifices.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are ambitious for Palestine to return once more to carry on with its civilized role and its humane, cultural, and religious model. We aspire to rebuild it in a way that would compensate our people for decades of persecution, injustice, and deprivation.

During the last few weeks, we took a series of steps to deal with the new data. The Palestinian Central Council decided to set up the Palestinian national authority which will take over the authority and responsibilities. We also set up the Palestinian Council for Construction and Development, which is the authorized body to coordinate the building process and international aid. The European Union's decision to deal with those two bodies makes us express our gratitude.

Our councils, our various councils within the occupied homeland and outside it, are continuing their extensive work to draft the rules and required laws in various fields, to put down the formulas and work mechanics and to build the necessary structures.

We set off in all that from our aspiration to establish a democratic, modern, and developed entity which achieves for our people what they have been fighting for over the past decades.

We are keen to strengthen the tradition of the democratic practice among our people by building a system based on pluralism, elections, freedom to form parties, separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, respect for human rights, and equality between women and men. It makes me happy while addressing the elected representatives of the European continent to let you know that we have very recently formed a special committee responsible for preparing the legal framework and providing the necessary requirements to hold legislative elections, municipal elections, and establishing local councils in our country. We are grateful for the interest shown by EU countries to help us in this sphere.

I would also like to let you know that a few days ago we sanctified the recognition of the higher national Palestinian organization for human rights—an independent organization to be formed of numerous Palestinian legal bodies which will assume the responsibility for guaranteeing respect for human rights in all legislation, statutes and laws to be approved, and in the work of the different organizations and institutions. Our people who suffered for tens of years from the violation of all their rights will make their national entity an oasis in which they enjoy all freedoms and in which the supremacy of law would be consolidated.

We work bearing in mind and holding before our eyes an aim to make of the experiment of building our national entity a model that conforms to our people's aspirations. Therefore, we have also approved an ambitious plan of development, as we have to start building from scratch in many spheres after the occupation has destroyed the basic infrastructure of our economy and distorted and impeded the development of many of our institutions.

Although we have defined the authorities's role in the reconstruction of infrastructures, we will, out of our concern to adopt liberal economic policies, nonetheless allow the private sector to play a role in the reconstruction process.

Furthermore, the eagerness shown by a large number of Palestinian investors, inside the homeland and in the diaspora, to contribute to the reconstruction and investment process, in conjunction with foreign donations by our friends in the world, has made us very optimistic about the future. We would like to mention here our gratefulness for the European contribution in this respect.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: Europe ought to play a major role in the reconstruction and the development process. And we have noted with great gratitude the European contribution to the committee of donor countries. Also, our tours in a various European countries have strengthened our conviction that our partners in the search for peace will also be principal partners in the reconstruction and development process.

The scale of destruction suffered by our economy and institutions and the scale of the acute economic crisis which our people have suffered as a result of the occupation requires swift action to implement as well as to increase the economic aid packages. Any delay in doing so would greatly harm the credibility of the peace process and slow its momentum.

I would like to note here that we have expected and we are still expecting a quicker process of meeting financial and economic demands and promises stipulated in the clauses of the the peace agreement.

I would like to reiterate here that we can see the European countries playing a major role in the reconstruction process whether through the ad hoc committee of donors, through the European Union, through bilateral relations or through the private sector, to implement joint ventures aiming at rebuilding the infrastructure, creating job opportunities, and transferring technology in such a way that will secure a real starting point for genuine development.

Ladies and gentlemen: The third task facing us is to build on the achievements created by the agreement so as to reach comprehensive peace.

As far as the Palestinian track is concerned, once the Israeli withdrawal is completed from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, which should be coupled with the Israeli forces' redeployment in the rest of the occupied territories, and once the Palestinian authority is extended to all Palestinian areas after seven months, the importance of the next step to negotiate the final arrangements, which should, according to the agreement, begin as soon as possible and not later than the third year of the transitional period, will become quite clear.

The problems facing a permanent solution on the bases of Security Council Resolution 242 are fundamental and basic issues—in the forefront of which are the problem of Jerusalem, the holy city, the problem of Palestinian refugees as stipulated by Resolution 194, and the problem of Israeli settlements, which have recently shown how much they could jeopardize peace. This makes it impossible for anyone to talk about full peace if they are not resolved to do so in accordance with international legality.

As far as other tracks are concerned, it is important and vital to move quickly to make progress in the other Arab tracks in a bid to complete the requirements for a just peace that will secure security and peace for the region's peoples and states and take our whole region to a new era.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: I would like to reiterate, once more, my happiness at being offered this opportunity to address you. I would like to assert, once more, that we are expecting a lot from Europe; and I would like to affirm, once more, our people's commitment to continue work so as to consecrate and complete the peace process in Palestine and in the region. Thank you.

'Arafat Seeks U.S. Help To Resume Gulf Aid

EA1112200093 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 09 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] AL-NAHAR has learned from a senior Palestinian source close to Yasir 'Arafat that during their meeting at the U.S. Embassy in Amman three days ago, the Palestinian president asked U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher that the U.S. Administration use its influence with the Arab Gulf states so that they will resume their financial aid to the PLO. This aid has been suspended since the outbreak of the Gulf crisis because of the PLO's pro-Iraqi stance.

Christopher Seeks Easing of Pressure on 'Arafat

PM1412115893 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Dec 93 p3

[Unattributed report: "U.S. Efforts To Ease the Pressure on PLO Leaders"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Washington has asked a number of Arab capitals visited by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on his Middle East tour to help ease the pressures on PLO leaders, especially President Yasir 'Arafat.

Informed sources in Cairo have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Washington pointed out that easing these pressures would open a new way for the consolidation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement and would contribute to the elimination of the obstacles preventing implementation of that agreement and to the efforts to promote the moderate view as opposed to the elements rejecting the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

The sources said that Christopher discussed this matter with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in particular, as Syria hosts 10 Palestinian factions which are opposed to the agreement and are trying to torpedo and abort it. Christopher's proposals in this connection reflect U.S. fears that the pressure brought to bear on the Palestinian wing which supports the agreement would adversely affect the PLO's ability to provide flexible alternatives to speed up the implementation of the agreement and complete the remaining phases of the negotiations.

The sources also said that the U.S. secretary of state raised this issue during his meeting in the Jordanian capital last week with King Husayn of Jordan and President 'Arafat. This indicates special U.S. interest in that point on which progress is considered essential for containing the escalating waves of violence in the occupied territory since the signing of the agreement. Christopher held both the Palestinians and the Israelis responsible for that and requested that a solution be found to stop it. The sources added that Christopher hinted that the United States might participate through dialogue, direct or through intermediaries, with those elements [causing the escalation] to calm the situation.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Cairo and some other Arab capitals have indeed begun making urgent efforts to stop the pressures to which 'Arafat and his supporters within the PLO are being subjected with a view to containing the mounting differences within the Palestinian arena.

Quray' Views Delayed Implementation of Accord

JN1312190993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1556 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', also known as Abu-al-'Ala', Fatah Central Committee member and head of the PLO Economic Department, in Tunis by radio correspondent Sa'id Mu'addi, carried within the "With the Events" feature; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Mr. Ahmad Quray', Abu-al-'Ala': Good afternoon.

[Quray'] Good afternoon.

[Mu'addi] Abu-al-'Ala', you are one of those who engineered the Israeli-Palestinian agreement initialed in Oslo. Yesterday, the implementation of this agreement was delayed because of some outstanding problems. Was this expected?

[Quray'] As a matter of fact, I do not believe that this postponement will preclude the implementation of this agreement. This agreement still has a chance of success. It is to be recalled that the 13 December deadline for signing a Palestinian-Israeli agreement may have addressed a positive message to the Palestinian and Israeli peoples, and to the world community at large, particularly since this community is awaiting the implementation of this agreement. At any rate, a 10-day delay in the implementation of this agreement is not that serious. We hope that outstanding difficulties will be overcome.

[Mu'addi] Abu-al-'Ala': Everybody realized today that the 13 December deadline is not holy. Let us brush aside the holiness of any deadlines. Is there a real crisis pertaining to outstanding issues?

[Quray'] Undoubtedly, the implementation of the agreement and its provisions on schedule could have been an extremely positive and excellent signal. However, some issues have remained unresolved. Anyhow, I hope that outstanding difficulties will be resolved within the next 10 days through the use of various channels and intensive contacts. It is hoped that an awareness of the importance of implementing and honoring the agreement on the part of both sides will prompt them to resolve these difficulties. It is also hoped that both sides will honor the spirit of the accord, the spirit of the negotiations, and the spirit of the peace process.

[Mu'addi] Abu-al-'Ala': Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said today that he cannot pledge that the implementation of the agreement will be completed by 13 April 1994. Do you agree with this?

[Quray'] I do not agree with him in this regard. As a matter of fact, I believe that the time from now until to 13 April is enough for consummating the initial steps enshrined in the agreement. Moreover, other steps will have to be taken. An interim government agreement must be drafted. Moreover, the elections must be held. The government and the interim council must also be set up. We must prepare ourselves properly and efficiently for the final status negotiations, which are the decisive negotiations in the peace process between us. In the course of this endeavor, a new spirit must be demonstrated, and mutual trust must be promoted.

[Mu'addi] What is the nature of the negotiations that will be conducted between both sides pending the next meeting due to be held between the prime minister and the PLO chairman?

[Quray'] I believe that there will be contacts between President Yasir 'Arafat and the Israeli prime minister to address unresolved issues, namely, the crossings issue, the issue pertaining to the area of the Jericho region, as well as other issues pertaining to the security of settlements.

[Mu'addi] Can we say that Abu-al-'Ala' is optimistic about a possible resolution of these problems pending the next meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat?

[Quray'] The issue has nothing to do with optimism or pessimism. The issue concerns a necessity, a basic requirement for the success of this process. These issues must be settled positively and constructively so this agreement may be implemented in the interest of both sides.

[Mu'addi] What about the economic meetings in Paris? What is on the agenda of these committee meetings?

[Quray'] These meetings have made good strides. They still have to address many issues. We are currently addressing three major issues, which could be expanded to cover details. Subcommittees have been formed to address these issues. These subcommittees began their meetings in Paris today. The first issue to be discussed concerns trade and labor; the second issue concerns banking; and the third issue concerns trade and customs. I believe that we are now close to an agreement on some issues, whereas other issues are still on the agenda. They need to be discussed.

[Mu'addi] Ahmad Quray', Abu-al-'Ala': Thank you very much for this interview.

[Quray'] You are most welcome.

'Abd-al-Shafi Reacts to Implementation Delay

JN1312191593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1601 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Our correspondent Hasan Abu-Zayid has sounded out the views of Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi [former head of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks] on the outcome of the meeting held between Rabin and 'Arafat in Cairo yesterday.

[Begin recording] ['Abd-al-Shafi] An agreement is supposed to be reached before the implementation of the peace accord is started. The failure to reach an agreement in the summit held between Rabin and 'Arafat is behind the delay in the implementation of the peace accord.

[Abu-Zayid] How do you see future developments in this regard?

['Abd-al-Shafi] First, I would like to reiterate previous statements I have made about the loopholes in this accord, the foremost among which is the loophole pertaining to settlement activities, which is more urgent than all other considerations. Anyhow, with regard to the current phase, which concerns issues pertaining to Gaza and Jericho, it is difficult for one to conceive of any eventuality, or to predict what will happen 10 days from now, after this delay. It is my feeling that Rabin is determined to adhere to the current Israeli position regarding the crossings and the area of the Jericho region, particularly since he has repeatedly made statements to this effect. There might be some flexibility or change as to the issue of security, and the extent of Palestinian involvement in security measures. How then would [words indistinct] be? This is an issue about which I can make no predictions.

[Abu-Zayid] Nonetheless, Rabin and 'Arafat agreed to meet after 10 days. Outstanding problems and obstacles will be resolved.

['Abd-al-Shafi] I hope so.

[Abu-Zayid] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi: How would these developments influence the average Palestinians in Gaza Strip and the West Bank?

['Abd-al-Shafi] I believe that these developments will cause anticipation and tension in the average Palestinians. This tension and anticipation is caused by the continuation of settlement activities. This anticipation will not last long if settlement activities are continued. [end recording]

Rabin 'Playing With Fire' by Withdrawal Delay

PM1412085693 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 13 Dec 93 p 11

[Editorial: "Setback of Withdrawal Postponement"]

[Text] Under the stipulations of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles agreement, Israeli forces are supposed to begin to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area this morning and to hand over security tasks to the Palestinian police. But it seems that Israel is not in the process of complying with this date. And all it can do is take symbolic steps like releasing 1,200 Palestinian detainees and allowing three known Palestinian deportees—Akram Haniyah, Muhammad Dahlan, and Jibril al-Rajub—to return.

Without doubt any concession offered by Israel—no matter how small—is a gain. And these detainees' release means restoring happiness to 1,200 families which have been deprived of their sons as a result of the Israeli repression. They were arrested because of their natural right to rise up against the occupier.

It must be recalled that 10,000 detainees are still held in Israeli jails, and the reasons for their detention were negated the moment the declaration of principles agreement was signed. But the Israeli Government—which is known for its procrastination, maneuvers, and blackmail—wants to use these as a pressure card in order to obtain "security" concessions from the Palestinians.

It is noted that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin emphasizes on every occasion and in his press statements, or through his advisers' statements, that there can be no concessions in security questions. And under this false "umbrella" all legitimate Palestinian demands—like control of the crossings or the settlements' removal—can be rejected.

It is difficult for us to understand how the release of Palestinian detainees can affect Israel's security as long as Israeli forces are going to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area. And how can Israel's security be affected if the Gaza Strip crossing is going to be under the Palestinians' control, when Israel has actually begun to build a huge fence on its border with the strip?!

What can be understood without difficulty is that Rabin, who is facing growing opposition to his policies from the extremist right, wants full peace with the Arabs and the Palestinians without a tangible return. In addition to this, he is requesting the PLO to understand his position without doing the same thing himself.

The nonrelease of the detainees has embarrassed the Palestinian leadership and its negotiators in Taba and al-'Arish. And the insistence on keeping a few settlers and settlements in a poor and crowded area like the Gaza Strip has aroused oppositionists' suspicion about Israeli intentions and also weakened the support for the agreement.

It is perhaps useful to recall that the huge support the declaration of principles agreement received from Palestinians in the Gaza Strip—even though the majority of these are 1948 refugees—was the result of the word "withdrawal" mentioned in the agreement. It had the impact of a magic word on them. This is in addition to the Palestinian interpretations of the agreement. Some of them say that the agreement will allow 750,000 of the 1967 refugees to return to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Delaying the withdrawal on the pretext of the lack of the required preparations may cause a huge disappointment for more than 1.2 million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip and Jericho—a disappointment which could torpedo the entire Palestinian moderation march which led to this modest agreement, which does not achieve the minimum of Palestinian aspirations and is nothing more than a step on the road to these aspirations.

Rabin is playing with fire and these maneuvers of his will inevitably serve those opposing the agreement on the Palestinian side and the Israeli side. If that is his intention, it is a disaster. If not, it is a bigger disaster, and the results will backfire on him and his government. As for the Palestinian people, they have not got much to lose, and as far as they are concerned, the harvest time has probably come.

Cairo Meeting Results Show Palestinian Firmness

JN1412082793 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The outcome of brother leader President Abu-'Ammar's [Yasir 'Arafat] talks with the Israeli prime minister in Cairo once again shows Palestinian firmness, insistence on the Palestinian interpretation of the Declaration of Principles agreement, and our inclination to implement it as a first step toward the building of an independent Palestinian state. This outcome also shows that the Israeli negotiator has come to realize and acknowledge this reality. Hence, the Israeli negotiator is maneuvering and trying his best to circumvent, oppose, or belittle this reality, and to emerge with the least possible losses that are expected as a result of this reality. This means that the Palestinian negotiator's adherence to his reading of the agreement will enhance the possibilities for implementing the agreement as a first step toward building an independent Palestinian state. Thus, the Israeli side is left with only a narrow margin of maneuver to reduce losses rather than to impose its deliberately ambiguous reading.

We are saying this because we are fully confident of our ability to overcome difficulties and impose the Palestinian reality and its will. For, it is a true and just will, and nothing else can make a just peace. Our will is one of blood-baptized struggle and heavy sacrifices. It is the will of the Palestinian people—the people of the armed revolution and the gigantic intifadah, which is proceeding confidently toward the dawn of freedom and independence.

'Ashrawi Denies Resignation Due To PLO Conflict

PM1412105193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Ilyas Nasrallah report: "Palestinian Spokeswoman Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: I have No Differences with 'Arafat"]

[Excerpts] London—It was easy for anyone who recently tried to contact Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, to notice that something unusual was going on in relation to that Palestinian lady who gave the Palestinian information and the cause of her people a tremendous international boost over at least the past five years. It suddenly became difficult to contact 'Ashrawi by telephone. It transpired that the mobile telephone she had, which made it possible to contact her wherever she was, had been withdrawn. Although the Palestinian spokeswoman explained to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the withdrawal of the mobile telephone from her was due to financial difficulties facing Bayt al-Mashriq, the PLO headquarters in Jerusalem for which Faysal al-Husayni is responsible, her resignation, announced by her yesterday, indicates something different.

An informed Palestinian source told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that 'Ashrawi's resignation was the result of a conflict between the leaders at home and abroad and the Palestinian president's decision to give most of the autonomy government posts to PLO figures in Tunis in a way that marginalizes the role and position of the Palestinian leadership which led the struggle from within [the occupied territory].

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that another step has recently be taken against Dr. 'Ashrawi. The car which was at her disposal and was paid for by the PLO has, like the telephone, been withdrawn. Furthermore, 'Ashrawi and her colleagues in the Palestinian negotiating team, who are all from the occupied territory, are now completely out of the current political picture and are not even being informed about the course of the current negotiations with the Israelis on autonomy arrangements.

According to reports from the occupied territory, 'Ashrawi's announcement of her resignation and intention to devote her time to serving human rights causes under the autonomy rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had something to do with the PLO Executive Committee meetings, which began the day before yesterday in Tunis for the purpose of preparing a list of people who will be given ministerial posts in the autonomy government in Gaza and Jericho.

But 'Ashrawi has denied this, emphasizing that she resigned because she had already decided not to assume any official post in the autonomy government and that she had informed the Palestinian leadership of her decision some time ago. 'Ashrawi had also turned down an offer of the post of Palestinian ambassador in Washington. [passage omitted]

Swedish radio said yesterday in a report from Jerusalem that 'Ashrawi was about to resign from the PLO leadership in protest against Yasir 'Arafat's style of running the PLO.

The radio said that 'Ashrawi, who accompanied 'Arafat on his tour of northern states [as published] last month, intended to leave the PLO leadership because she considered it undemocratic.

But 'Ashrawi denied the Swedish radio report and its interpretation of the resignation. She said: "It is completely wrong. That is their interpretation. I believe that these are extremely crucial times and there are serious problems. I do not want to start my work by voicing criticism."

PLO's al-Najjab on Draft Constitutional System

PM1012121093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 9 Dec 93 p 2

[Report on interview with PLO Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] PLO Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab has said that the discussion of the formation of the national authority committee, which will run the self-rule in Gaza and Jericho after the Israeli withdrawal, has been postponed until the meeting scheduled to be held by the PLO Executive Committee today, in order to complete consultations with national leaders and figures inside [the occupied territories].

Asked about the nature of the measures taken so far in relation to the draft constitutional system for the national authority, which was submitted by Dr. Anis al-Qasim, head of the Palestine National Council Legal Committee, al-Najjab told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that after a preliminary reading of this important constitutional document, the Executive Committee decided to refer it to a committee of Palestinian jurists from inside and outside in order to draw up a final version. This committee will begin its meetings in Amman tomorrow.

The committee in question will submit its final draft to the Executive Committee in preparation for informing the Palestinian people of it and seeking their approval.

Al-Najjab, who represents the People's [formerly Communist] Party in the Executive Committee, added that this document emphasizes the democratic and civilized nature of the Palestinian authority. It stipulates respect for political pluralism, public freedoms, the rule of law, and equality among all Palestinian people with no racial or religious discrimination. The document also compels the Palestinian national authority to respect human rights and freedoms as specified by international charters and conventions.

Asked whether the Executive Committee has discussed the memorandum submitted by the People's Party and national figures, urging the Palestinian leadership to make fundamental democratic reforms in the way the PLO is run, al-Najjab said: "The Executive Committee has not discussed this memorandum because it still has not received all the signatures. Once it receives this memorandum with all the signatures on it, it will discuss it."

But when he was reminded of claims that he handed the memorandum to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat personally, al-Najjab just said: "I was entrusted to deliver an unsigned copy of the memorandum to President 'Arafat. The aim was to acquaint the Palestinian leadership with the memorandum as it stands, not as some reports tried to distort it. I told 'Arafat—as those concerned with the memorandum instructed me to do—that the memorandum would be sent to him after the signatures are completed."

Al-Najjab pointed out that this memorandum is an honest summing up of the demands of a large number of Palestine Central Council members, and that he had submitted it to the council's recent session, which ratified the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. They are joint demands by both those who supported the agreement and who who expressed reservations about it. The important thing is for these demands to attended to and implemented by the Palestinian leadership! Al-Najjab added that those concerned with the memorandum are currently in the process of "forming a democratic grouping characterized by continuity, and they have formed a provisional follow-up committee for this purpose. This grouping includes political figures, writers, intellectuals, and representatives of Palestinian national forces from inside and outside who support the agreement and are working to reinforce and develop the PLO and its national role."

Regarding what is being said in some circles, namely that the People's Party is seeking through the democratic reform memorandum to play a distinguished role on the Palestinian scene and lead the opposition, al-Najjab said: "The People's Party is only seeking to develop the PLO's policy and performance so as to match the new stage into which national struggle is entering and its new and complex tasks." He added that the People's Party agrees on this action with numerous Palestinian national forces. So "we do not claim that we have become the leading party and the vanguard of the opposition parties."

Regarding some people's saying that the People's Party's aim behind this is to achieve narrow partisan aims and interests, al-Najjab stressed that these accusations will not dissuade our party from continuing to adhere to the demands listed in the democratic reform memorandum or its determination to work to achieve a broad national coalition based on parity in the relationship among the parties participating in it and the commitment to the policy of common denominators decided by the committees authorized under this agreement.

Draft Constitution Distributed for Discussion

PM1412112593 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Dec 93 p 5

[Rashid Khashanah report: "Fatah Central Committee Preparing To Discuss Draft Palestinian Constitution"]

[Excerpt] Tunis—Well-informed Palestinian sources in Tunis have said that Fatah Central Committee members have received copies of the Palestinian National Authority's fundamental law (constitution) in preparation for holding a special meeting to discuss it.

The sources pointed out to AL-HAYAH that the draft constitution allows PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to retain his powers as head of state in the Palestinian entity during the transitional phase, whereas the national authority (government) will have a head who takes the oath with the authority's members (ministers) "before the Executive Committee chairman."

The draft constitution, which includes the full text of the oath, does not specify the number of authority members. However, an Executive Committee member has affirmed to AL-HAYAH that the number ranges between 10 and 25.

Furthermore, the draft constitution allows the head of the "national authority" to run for one five-year term after the end of the transitional phase—which means that the prime minister's overall term could reach 10 years.

Meanwhile a high-ranking Fatah official has disclosed that Faysal al-Husayni, who was appointed representative for the movement in the West Bank, and Zakariyya al-Agha, who was appointed a representative for the movement in the Gaza Strip, are members of the Fatah Central Committee, "but the circumstances of the secrecy in which the Fifth General Congress was held in 1988 prevented the announcement of their membership." [passage omitted]

PLO May Halt Talks if 'Arafat-Rabin Summit Fails

JN1412122893 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 14 Dec 93 pp 1, 22

[By Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Text] The two stands are 180 degrees apart and the Palestinian and Israeli sides are moving along two parallel lines. They will not converge unless Washington, which has the means to pressure Israel, performs a political miracle, and unless there is help from Egypt and Norway, in their capacity as the two countries which hosted public and behind-the-scenes Palestinian-Israeli meetings.

Despite this big gap, a Palestinian leader has summarized the results of the Palestinian-Israeli summit held in Cairo the day before yesterday by saying: Neither of the concerned parties has the ability to stop the wheel. There must be a way out of the impasse in the negotiations. Ultimately, there is no alternative to an agreement since the two parties have no other choices.

Information from Cairo says that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin presented to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat a 'redeployment' plan which was presented by Amnon Shahaq at the negotiations in Taba without any changes in order to catch the attention of the Palestinian side.

This Palestinian leader, who requested anonymity, said that differences between the two sides are deeper and above being resolved at the committees' level. He said: The disputed issues need continuous work by decision-makers.

He did not rule out a new Camp David to create the appropriate climate for a deal, just like what happened with Anwar al-Sadat, the former Egyptian president, and Menachem Begin, Israel's prime minister at the time, when relations between them were on the verge of collapse and U.S. President Jimmy Carter intervened in an attempt to save these relations at Camp David.

He noted the importance of a third party to help the two parties break the stalemate in their negotiations. Egypt expressed its willingness to help in this regard. He said that within this context, the Palestinian side is holding contacts with the United States and Norway.

Salih Ra'fat, member of the Palestinian delegation to the negotiations in Taba, told AL-DUSTUR that there is a big gap between the Palestinian and Israeli stands on the so-called withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, which, in fact, is a redeployment of the Israel army that allows it to tighten its control over the Palestinian territories but this time with a legitimate recognition from us.

He said: The Israelis want large and exclusive areas for the settlements. They also want to have control of the roads leading to the settlements, the Palestinian-Egyptian crossing, and the sea, air, and ground transportation from and to the Gaza Strip.

They also want the Jericho area, included in the Declaration of Principles, not to exceed the areas of the city of Jericho, 'Ayn al-Sultan camp, and 'Aqabat Jabr camp. Moreover, the Israelis want to have total control over the Jordan River and the bridges at a time when the Palestinian side insists on achieving a full withdrawal and transfer of security and civil powers, including control over the Palestinian-Egyptian border and sea, air, and ground transportation.

He added that the Palestinian side will not give up the administrative borders of the district of Jericho as defined before 1967. He also noted that the Palestinian side will not give up the issue of control over the bridges and crossing points.

Regarding what is taking place on the ground in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, he said releasing some detainees or reducing the Israeli military arsenal in a number of camps in the Gaza Strip are mere unilateral measures aimed at ignoring basic issues and at depicting these measures as Israeli concessions in order to gain more Palestinian flexibility and concessions on other substantial issues.

He noted that the 10 days between now and the next 'Arafat-Rabin summit in Cairo is the last chance offered by the Palestinian side to rescue the negotiations. He hinted at the possibility of suspending the meetings of the negotiating committees if Israel continues to adamantly refuse to withdraw or transfer all powers to the Palestinian authority.

He said: The PLO may announce the suspension of negotiations if the next summit fails. He stressed that the Palestinians insist on the complete Israeli withdrawal and the resolution of the issues of the crossing points, borders, full transfer of power, and release of all detainees.

Ten Factions Denounce Accord, Iraqi Embargo

JN1412063793 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Ten Palestinian factions [opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace talks] have denounced the continued embargo against the Iraqi people. The factions said the embargo aims at subjugating the Arab nation and undermining the Palestine question and pan-Arab development.

In a statement and speeches delivered at a speech rally in Sanaa yesterday evening, the factions called for supporting the Iraqi people's struggle and opposition to U.S. aggression and arrogance.

The factions affirmed that the Gaza-Jericho agreement between the PLO and the Zionist entity is a conspiracy that seeks to legitimize Zionist existence on the land of Palestine.

PFLP Leader on Dislike of Gaza-Jericho Accord

AU1412104093 Vienna DER STANDARD in German 14 Dec 93 p 3

[Interview with George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and his adviser Abu-Khalil [name as received] by Gudrun Harrer in Damascus, date not given: "Only Aspirin for Palestinians"]

[Text] [Harrer] You categorically reject the Gaza-Jericho agreement. But even your host country Syria has signalled a willingness to talk to Israel. Is your opposition front beginning to crumble?

[Abu-Khalil] The 10 Palestinian organizations here in Damascus, and especially the PFLP [People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine], will do whatever they can to prevent this agreement from coming into force. But, at the same time, we do not want an internal Palestinian conflict with the groups who are in favor of the agreement. And, in contrast to what many media say—as has recently happened in Austria as well—completely distorting our comments, we are not personally after 'Arafat.

[Harrer] What do you dislike most about the agreement?

[Habash] That is quite simple. The agreement is nothing but an aspirin for the Palestinians' problems. It neither clarifies the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories, nor does it clarify the status of Jerusalem, or the problem of Jewish settlements—not even Palestinian self-rule. A free and independent Palestinian state—the foremost aim of the intifada: The agreement will not bring it about.

[Harrer] Many Palestinians consider it a first step.

[Habash] No, it is not, because 'Arafat has already laid down all the arms. If I were 'Arafat, I would have continued to support the intifada—its escalation. International resolutions differ widely from what the agreement says. We only expect the resolutions to be taken just as seriously in our case as Bush did with Iraq.

[Harrer] However, with your categoric rejection, you are also fairly isolated in the Arab world.

[Habash] I regret to say that the regimes in the Arab world are conditioned by the United States. This will not influence our struggle. We try to collect all the forces that are opposed to the agreement within a "national democratic Islamic front." Its task will be to revive the intifada. Just under 40 percent of the population in the occupied territories say "let us try it," but the rest is strictly against the agreement. They have seen now that Israel is not going to withdraw.

DFLP Leader Hawatimah Urges 'Global' Peace Plan

BR1012143493 Brussels LE SOIR in French 9 Dec 93 p 6

[Interview with Nayif Hawatimah, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, by Baudouin Loos in Damascus on 12 November: "'So Let Them Organize a Referendum'"]

[Text] Damascus—He is one of the historic leaders of the PLO, and—especially—has long embodied an original wing of the Palestinian movement. Nayif Hawatimah and his Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) long ago joined the ranks of the "radicals," i.e., those who even condemned the talks in Madrid and then Washington, well before denouncing the declaration of principles signed in Washington between Israel and the PLO.

[Loos] How do you analyze the wave of enthusiasm that has taken hold of a large proportion of the population in the occupied territories following the Washington agreement?

[Hawatimah] 13 September marked a blatant paradox. In Washington a Hollywood-style carnival was being celebrated while the occupied territories were paralyzed by a general strike called by the DFLP and other organizations. We are also seeing major demonstrations in the camps of the diaspora. Why? Because the agreement was signed behind the backs of the Palestinian people, behind the backs of the PLO leadership, even Fatah, and behind the backs of the Arab countries. Now, the people are divided in the occupied territories. Certain tradesmen and many poor people hope to see their status improved. Others are opposed, and a third category is waiting and watching to see if progress is being made. These people are joining with the opposition because it is clear that the Israelis are demanding new Palestinian concessions vis-a-vis their "withdrawal" from Gaza, prisoners, etc.

[Loos] What do you have against the agreement?

[Hawatimah] 'Arafat did not obtain the minimum: a halt to colonization and the right to self-determination in accordance with international law. As of the sixth round, Rabin offered more to the Palestinian delegation at the bilateral negotiations in Washington: autonomy in the occupied territories divided into four separate regions having no geographical links. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the delegation, refused outright, and then 'Arafat went on to obtain even less than that in Oslo: Gaza (without a real Israeli withdrawal and the maintenance of the settlers) and Jericho, without even obtaining border controls!

[Loos] What alternative are you proposing?

[Hawatimah] We continue to demand a global peace based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338 (peace for land) and the settling of the refugee problem on the basis of Resolution 194 (the right of return or compensation), which concerns 60 percent of the Palestinian people. We genuinely want peace for two independent states side by side, which is something that the Washington declaration will not lead to. We are also demanding a referendum on the agreement in question, and we will respect the outcome of it. You know, in 1974 I was the first Palestinian to demand this solution involving two states and the first to advocate this historic reconciliation. This definitely remains our goal! As was the case during those years, we are still in contact with the Israeli left.

[Loos] Does your alliance with the "10" radical organizations based in Damascus serve your cause?

[Hawatimah] The term "Damascus 10" is suspect, an invention of the Israeli and American media. We have a presence in the Arab world and the occupied territories, as does the rest of the PLO. We are not just in Damascus, just as 'Arafat is not just in Tunis. Compared to Hamas [Islamic Resistance] and [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command leader Ahmad] Jibril, our position is clear and known: We challenge the extremism of the former and the calls for murder of the latter. In passing, I would like to point out the PLO chairman himself is demanding—to anyone who will listen—the release of Shaykh Yasin, the Hamas founder being held by Israel. In our struggle, we must enter into tactical alliances which in no way conceal our political differences. Moreover, the PLO, of which we are a part, is itself a meeting point for different strands united by a minimum program. That is what 'Arafat has broken up.

[Loos] What would your rank and file be here in Damascus if Syria signs with Israel?

[Hawatimah] The DFLP has said, and has repeated, to the PLO, Syria, and the other parties concerned that the negotiation arrangement that came out of the Madrid conference will not accede to Palestinian interests. Unfortunately, the agreement on "Gaza-Jericho First" shows that we are right. If other parties sign with Israel, that is their choice. As for knowing our fate in Damascus, that depends on Syria, a sovereign country in which we do not want to interfere.

DFLP Denounces U.S. Stance on Jerusalem

JN1112171493 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1610 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Damascus, 11 Dec (SANA)—The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine has criticized the U.S. position which refuses to recognize that Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip are territories occupied by Israel. It denounced the U.S. argument that it does not want to influence the negotiations on Gaza-Jericho agreement in advance.

In a statement distributed here today, the front criticized the U.S. position on the Palestinian refugees and their right to return to their homeland.

The statement said the United States is trying, during the present session of the UN General Assembly, to abort the international terms of reference regarding the Palestine question, and to replace them with new resolutions that ignore the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, led by their right to return and self-determination .

DFLP Calls for Elections in Gaza, West Bank

JN1212175893 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1555 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Damascus, 12 Dec (SANA)—A spokesman for the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine has emphasized the need for resorting to popular legitimacy by holding municipal elections in occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank in order to emphasize the people's right to choose their representatives, instead of the policy of imposition, containment, and tutelage.

In a statement distributed here today, the spokesman called for electing municipal councils in Gaza and the West Bank as a democratic right that is one of the simplest human rights, as happened in elections of Bi'r Zayt in the West Bank, the Islamic University in Gaza, the Society Faculty in Ramallah, the doctors' elections, and in other cases.

The statement urged the Palestinian people and all factions, forces, and figures in Gaza Strip to insist on municipal elections and to reject bureaucratic appointment.

Effort To Build Independent State Praised

JN1412092093 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] There, on the land of the Palestinian state, there is no idleness. There, the masses of strugglers are engaged in struggle. Around the clock, the people of the intifadah are building the edifice of their free, independent state. No idleness. We, people of the intifadah, are devoting ourselves to fighting and building. A brick here, a brick there, and the edifice will become higher. The dark night of occupation will not last. The people have decided that the night of occupation will come to an end. Caravans are proceeding and banners are flying in the skies of glory. Palestinian justice will prevail. There, on the land of glory, there is no idleness. There, the people of the intifadah are rushing to the arenas of honor, where demonstrations and clashes are raging, nationalist songs are sung, and where arms and chests are responding to the land's demand for sacrifices. There, there is no idleness. There, hands are tirelessly working, warm blood is being shed, and a roaring flood of revolutionaries is sweeping the land. No idleness. Rather, stones are pouring down on the heads of the occupiers. Flags are fluttering over the mosques, churches, and hills. Oh what a glory! It is your glory, people of the intifadah. Oh what a great victory! It is your victory, people of the intifadah.

Commentary Says Intifadah 'Do-or-Die' Conflict

JN1412091293 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, the intifadah is continuing until the establishment of a Palestinian state. The intifadah is continuing until full independence is achieved. All Israeli wagers on a halt to the intifadah, in whatever manner, is a losing, defeated wager on all levels and in all aspects. This is because the intifadah is not just a kind of protest, nor is it a demand for ending some of the occupation's injustice or easing the occupation's measures or practices. The intifadah is a full-blown do-or-die conflict that seeks to defeat and remove occupation once and for all. It also seeks to undermine all the foundations of occupation to liberate Palestinian territory and set up a Palestinian state.

The intifadah is our only option. It is the embodiment of our entire force. It is a continuation of the cycles of our do-or-die conflict with the Israeli occupation. It is a new, comprehensive life for our people and our Palestinian community. It is also a reestablishment of our Palestinian homeland, a homeland free of the filth of the loathsome occupation and all the traces of its existence, whatever the blood and sacrifices involved; no matter how intense and severe the conflict gets; and no matter how long it takes.

O our struggling, heroic people; O our giant, great generations; O our valiant, unyielding masses; O our knights of the blessed intifadah: Move forward with full hope, confidence, and creativity on the road of our inevitable victory and our comprehensive independence.

It is a revolution, a continuing, ever-growing intifadah until victory.

National Unity Urged at Current 'Critical Stage'

JN1412085993 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, while knocking on the door of freedom and opening wide the doors of national independence, we thus affirm that the conflict has been settled in favor of our ever-growing national will and independent decision. Our will is embodied in one national unity and the unity of one people inside and outside [the Palestinian territories]. This people upholds the banner of its unified national leadership, the pioneer of its struggle, the PLO.

If anything, these facts prove that the struggle of our people, the Palestinian people, has made achievements and gains on the ground. There is nothing the enemy can do except recognize these facts and their legitimacy, even if the enemy does this unwillingly. This is because it has finally dawned on the enemy that its continued occupation of the soil of our homeland, Palestine, is now impossible. Therefore, it has only this option: either to leave or perish.

For these facts to be bolstered and for an independent Palestinian state to be established, we should make it our top priority to support and sustain every effort that enhances and solidifies our national unity, considering the fact that we are experiencing a very critical stage of Palestinian national struggle. Therefore, emphasis on national unity for all the sectors of our people inside and outside is a major criterion of true nationalism that serves to achieve our people's aspirations for freedom and independence.

The interest of the homeland and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state takes precedence over all other considerations.

Police Commander Queried on Role of New Force

NC1212091193 Paris AFP in English 0834 GMT 12 Dec 93

[By Barry Parker]

[Text] Gaza City, Occupied Gaza Strip, Dec 12 (AFP)—The Palestinian police force is suffering from an image problem, if not an identity crisis, in the uncertain hours before autonomy is implemented in the occupied territories.

While Israelis are asking who the new policemen are and what powers they will have, and even threatening to shoot them on sight, the Palestinians want to know when and what are they taking over, and who will control them.

Where are the guns, where are the uniforms and even, when are they coming?

The man who should be able to answer at least some of the questions is keeping silent, partly because he does not know and partly because he is awaiting orders from the Palestine Liberation Organization in Tunis.

"Brigadier-General" Ziyad 'Arif has spent much of the three weeks since he arrived in Gaza to prepare the new force calming the fears of rival Palestinian factions that the police will be a political tool for repression.

With many recruits undergoing training in Egypt and Jordan, where human rights groups regularly lambast abuses, and the rest coming from Palestine Liberation Army units scattered across the Arab world, some concern seems justified.

"Our police will ensure human rights and act in a democratic fashion," 'Arif assured AFP, in the only interview he has granted so far.

Opponents of the PLO's September 13 autonomy deal are little inclined to believe him.

"There are many signs already that the future Palestinian authority will not work to strengthen democracy," said Ghazi Abu-Jayab, Gaza head of the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

"The Palestinian police that 'Arafat is setting up is nothing more than a militia for his own Fatah group," he said.

Khalid Hindi, recently released from an Israeli jail for membership of the Islamic Resistance movement HAMAS, voiced "fear for the way the police will treat the Islamic tendency".

And Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi is founding a body to monitor human rights under the Palestinian authority.

However, the uncertainty did not prevent thousands of Palestinians from trying to join the force which Israel says could have as many as 15,000 lightly-armed officers.

'Arif is counting on Palestinian pride at seeing their own people in uniform in Gaza and Jericho for the first time to help overcome many of the teething problems.

Up to 6,000 police will be deployed in a first stage, the brigadier said.

Some 500 Gazans who served in the Israeli police or trained before the uprising began in December 1987 are ready to go into police stations next week.

Maintaining order will be in the hands of a national police, a security service and local police.

"If the Israelis agree to start their withdrawal on December 13, Palestinian policemen will be on the streets on December 13," the brigadier said. A first batch of 1,500 men would be dispatched from Cairo as soon as withdrawal starts.

Palestinian sources say the Israeli army will hand over a police station, a prison holding 250 Palestinians and a military court at Gaza's seafront Hof base, the biggest in the city.

The Palestinians can move in, but cannot carry weapons until Israel and the PLO reach an interim agreement on the implementation of their September 13 autonomy deal.

The interim agreement should be sealed by Monday [13 December] and 'Arafat is to meet Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in Cairo on Sunday in a bid to settle differences.

Israel has called for a delay in implementation.

While Palestinians are worried about the new force, many Israelis are apoplectic about it.

Nearly one in every five of the 120,000 settlers is prepared to use a gun to resist arrest by the Palestinian police, according to an opinion poll, and one far-right MP has threatened to shoot them on sight.

The settlers have launched a nationwide petition under the banner "Don't give guns to killers."

Rabin riposted: "I am not giving anyone guns, they will have to buy them for themselves."

Russian Envoy Hands Message to 'Arafat

LD1112174493 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Brother President Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat] received a letter today from the Russian Government on the developments in the Middle East peace process and the need to implement on time the Palestinian-Israeli agreement on the Declaration of Principles.

Brother President Abu-'Ammar was handed the letter this afternoon by Russian Ambassador to Tunisia Boris Shchiborin. During the meeting, the Russian ambassador reiterated his country's support for the Palestinian people and for the steps being taken by the PLO to implement the agreement on the Declaration of Principles.

Deportees Flee Camp Fearing Arrest by Israelis

NC1012173793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Sixteen of the Palestinian deportees in Marj al-Zuhur camp in south Lebanon have left for other places fearing that the Israeli authorities may arrest them if they return. They left their camp before the scheduled return of the last batch of 415 Palestinians deported by Israel to south Lebanon.

Algeria

Government Starts Talks With IMF on Debt

LD1312213993 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] The premiership this evening issued a statement clarifying the method chosen by the government to deal with the problem of indebtedness. The statement says:

Since its formation, the Algerian Government has studied the grave consequences of servicing foreign debts with regard to reviving our economy. The servicing of foreign debts, which absorb three-quarters of export income, constitutes a danger not only to economic development, but also to social and political stability in our country.

From the outset, contacts were established with the director general of the IMF to open negotiations with these institutions in order to seek appropriate solutions to the problem. During a recent visit by an official IMF delegation to Algeria, a review was made of possible solutions. It has now become clear that it is impossible to secure foreign financing which is appropriate for our country without resorting to a reduction in the size of the foreign debt, in particular amid deteriorating conditions within the oil market.

The Government intends to conclude an agreement with the IMF on a program based on a multilateral restructuring that would ensure an appropriate foreign financing that could present a permanent revival program for our economy.

Out of his concern for the open management of Algeria's economic and financial affairs with its principal foreign partners, the head of the Government is eager to inform them that negotiations have been initiated between Algeria and the IMF.

VAT Reduced; Social Allowances To Be Increased

LD1012222993 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] The council of government adopted new measures yesterday when discussing the 1994 finance law. These measures are aimed at helping local authorities make savings in their budgets. They are also aimed at increasing the range of public services by reducing the value-added tax [VAT] and restructuring foreign trade. Other social measures were taken for the benefit of the elderly, the disabled, and victims of terrorism and their dependants. The monthly allowances of these social categories will be reviewed and increased.

The council of government has estimated that the deficit in the 1994 state budget will be lower than that of 1993.

Party Uncertain Over Participation in Dialogue

LD1312230193 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] The Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD] is waiting to hear more about the platform for the transitional period before making up its mind on whether to take part in the next stages of political dialogue or not, according to a statement by the RCD.

The statement, which was issued today, said the party believes that the National Dialogue Commission overstepped its powers when it publicly unveiled its decisions on the form and content of the dialogue before the rest of the dialogue partners could have a say.

The RCD added that it might withdraw from the dialogue and boycott the national conference once there is confirmation that the commission has had contacts with the disbanded Islamic Salvation Front and invited it to take part in the dialogue.

Ali Kafi Receives Tunisian Justice Minister

LD1112203493 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Higher State Council Chairman Ali Kafi received at the presidency this morning Tunisian Justice Minister Sadok Chaabane, special envoy of Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

[Begin Chaabane recording] I came from Tunisia with a written message from his excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to his brother and friend, his excellency Chairman Ali Kafi. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The message affirmed the need for cooperation and consultation between the two countries and the consolidation of joint Maghreb action, as well as other matters that will bolster the forthcoming meetings of the Arab Maghreb Union.

Egypt

Bosnian Vice President Ganic Arrives in Cairo

NC1312194993 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Ejup Ganic, vice president of Bosnia-Herzegovina, arrived in Cairo this evening on a visit to Egypt during which he will meet with President Husni Mubarak.

Ganic said that he will deliver a message to Mubarak from President Alija Izetbegovic. He will also brief Egyptian officials on the latest developments in his country and the hardships suffered by the Bosnian people as a result of Serbian aggression, which has caused the death of more than 200,000 people and displaced thousands of others, a crime unsurpassed by any in central Europe since early in the century.

Ganic added that he will request greater Egyptian material and political assistance for his country and will ask that Egypt, via its good relations with various countries, make efforts to obtain greater international support for his country.

Meets Mubarak, Comments

NC1412112593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1014 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 14 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak today received Ejup Ganic, vice president of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Following the meeting, Ganic stated that he seized today's opportunity to thank President Mubarak and the Egyptian people for their constant support to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He said that he briefed President Mubarak on all the details of the current developments in his country, the political efforts by some international parties, and the Geneva negotiations. He added that President Mubarak told him that efforts are being made to urge the international community to stop the aggression against Bosnia and to establish peace in that part of the world. He said: The European community's current efforts are focusing on partitioning our homeland and creating problems for us.

The Bosnian official went on to say: The international community has so far failed to stop the crime being committed against the Bosnian people and at the same time is not allowing us to defend ourselves and stop the aggression. This is one of the reasons for my coming to Cairo; to acquaint the Egyptian people with our suffering and tragedy and to ask for more aid and backing. He added: We believe that Egypt has a number of political pressure tools which could be used with the international community so that the latter can help and send us weapons, allowing us to defend ourselves, especially as we have right on our side.

Ganic said: We will continue to fight and will never surrender. We will not leave our territories and this is the only way before us.

The Bosnian vice president appealed to the international community, particularly the Islamic one, to help Bosnia. He said: We are being killed just because we are Muslims and not for any other reason. Some have told us that the matter would have been different had we been Christians. We are living in Central Europe and it is unbelievable that we are being killed and expelled from our territories just because we are Muslims. We have been established in our lives there for a long time and have built our civilization in this region.

He called on all the world's Muslims to help the Bosnian people and achieve peace there. He noted in this respect that the international community has so far not taken any serious step to halt the Serbs' aggressions and stop the Serbian bombardment of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Bosnian vice president said that all the peoples are saddened by what is happening in Bosnia because the same could happen in any part of the world.

Concluding his statement, Ganic said that he has visited several countries in the region and will leave Cairo tomorrow, Wednesday, to return to Sarajevo.

Editorial Questions U.S. Position on Jerusalem

NC1212070393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0605 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 12 Dec (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR has expressed its astonishment over the United States' objection to the UN's latest resolution, which demands that Israel respect human rights, rejects consideration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and warns all countries against establishing embassies in Jerusalem. In an editorial today, the paper says that the U.S. objection to this resolution represents a strange paradox because the United States has been concerned about retaining its embassy in Tel Aviv, which means that it does not recognize the unification of Jerusalem under Israeli control. The paper wonders if a change has occurred in the U.S. position on the Jerusalem issue.

U.S. Action To Stop Spread of Nuclear Arms Viewed

NC1012164393 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 6 Dec 93 p 2

["Comment" column by Sayyid Mustafa: "The Nuclear Contradiction"]

[Text] In his speech before the UN General Assembly on 27 September, U.S. President Bill Clinton said that one of the most urgent priorities of U.S. policy in a post-Cold War world is the need to confront the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of mass destruction.

He discussed the possibility that over 10 countries have such weapons and that there is a danger the number could increase, creating instability in various regions.

The United States is trying hard to apply this policy in many places. The world is currently witnessing an escalation between the first power in the world and North Korea. This escalation has reached the level of threats of war or threats to wage abortive attacks if Pyongyang does not adhere to the agreement on placing nuclear weapons under international supervision. We also notice a strict tone when U.S. officials discuss the nuclear capacities of countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and Iraq as well as their special abilities to produce weapons of mass destruction.

Often, U.S. officials shy away from answering questions on Israeli nuclear power and its effect on stability in the region. A few days ago, State Department Spokesman Michael McCurry said he needs preparation to answer such a question.

In a news conference at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Frank Wisner, undersecretary of defense for policy, said, concluding his recent visit to Egypt, that there is a confusion of positions when North Korea's nuclear power and Israel's nuclear force are discussed. His only justification for this confusion was that Israel has not signed the nonproliferation treaty and that North Korea is threatening its neighbors.

The atmosphere of peace into which the region is moving badly needs this nuclear contradiction or policy of double standards applied in one area and forgotten in another to end. Washington needs to take effective measures and work together with countries in the region to rid them of the nightmare of total annihilation. Egypt, on an initiative by President Husni Mubarak to rid the region of weapons of mass destruction, was at the front of this field. The United States needs to adopt such constructive initiatives for peace to reign in the world of the new order.

Parties Back Libya, Boycott U.S. Products

NC1112060193 Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 6 Dec 93 p 8

[Report by 'Abd-al-Salam al-Wahati]

[Excerpts] At a large popular conference attended by the heads of the Egyptian parties and national forces, the conferees declared their support for the Libyan people in regard to the increased sanctions on Libya. They also declared a boycott of U.S. products and called on employees in the transport and unloading sectors not to provide this service to ships and planes and to go on strike for 48 hours. The heads of the parties and national forces held their conference at the headquarters of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party last Wednesday. [passage omitted]

Ibrahim al-Bishari, the general coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, spoke during the conference on behalf of the Libyan people. He said: We have learned that lofty Egypt is the one always confronting fierce onslaughts. Your brothers in Libya appreciate this stance of yours. However, what is happening today will not be on the same scale as what we experienced during the Italian occupation, 30 years of struggle. We said: Yes, let them [the two Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie plane bombing] go where they will be tried before world public opinion. But they [the West] politicized the issue.

We were one of the poorest nations before 1961. We were also willing to become the poorest people once again, so long as we live in dignity. If they attempt to attack Libya, history will record a historic epic for the Libyan people which will make the aggressors regret their actions. [passage omitted]

Musa Returns From India, Views G-15 Conference

NC1212065393 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa returned to Cairo this morning from India after heading the Egyptian delegation to the meetings of the foreign ministers of the Group of 15 [G-15]. In an arrival statement, he said that the conference discussed the circumstances that led to the postponement of the Group of 15 summit meeting. He said that it has been decided that the summit will be held in India in the spring after careful preparations. He noted that the foreign ministers will prepare for this meeting. He pointed out that the conference discussed a number of topics and approved of Egypt's proposal to work out a plan for cooperation in designing, implementing, and administering petroleum, gas, and petrochemical projects. He said that seven member-countries have joined this plan along with Egypt. He said that the implementation of this plan will begin next month. He noted that he handed messages from President Mubarak to the Indian president and prime minister on issues relating to the Group of 15. Musa will submit a report to President Mubarak on the results of his meetings and contacts in India.

IMF Representative Comments on Debt

NC1312162193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1352 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (MENA)—Dr. 'Abd-al-Shakur Sha'lan, representative of Egypt and the Arab group at the IMF, today denied reports that the IMF has refused to write off a second 15-percent installment of Egypt's debts to the Paris Club creditors so that a total of 30 percent of these debts would be written off. Sha'lan said these reports are erroneous.

'Abd-al-Shakur Sha'lan said that the Paris Club countries agreed in October to write off this percentage [a second 15 percent] of Egypt's debts, which amounts to some $4 billion, in line with the agreement that Egypt signed with the IMF in September. The Paris Club was informed at that time of this agreement. [passage indistinct]

Chief of Staff Leaves for Germany, Greece

NC1312122093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1150 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (MENA)—Lieutenant General Salah Halabi, chief of staff of the Armed Forces, left Cairo this afternoon on an official visit to Germany and Greece at the head of a military delegation to discuss strengthening military cooperation between Egypt and each of the two countries.

The visit falls within the framework of the Egyptian Armed Forces' plan to strengthen cooperation with friendly countries.

'Fugitive Terrorist' Killed in Upper Egypt

NC1312141193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (MENA)—Fugitive terrorist Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab Muhammad Ahmad, better known as Muhammad Hilmi, a 33-year-old student at the College of Education, was killed after he fired at police trying to arrest him, a responsible source at the Interior Ministry has stated.

The source noted that the terrorist took refuge in the plantation area near the village of Dishna in Qina Governorate, where he would meet his accomplices in recent terrorist crimes. The source added that forces from the State Security Intelligence Department, accompanied by forces from other investigative agencies and antiterrorism troops, surrounded the area last night in a plan to arrest the suspect, who was known for his ruthlessness and violence.

New Policy on States Backing 'Terrorists' Urged

NC1212064593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 11 Dec (MENA)—AL-AHRAM newspaper has called for changing Egypt's policy on dealing with some foreign countries and forces that allow terrorists to reside in these countries or provide direct or indirect assistance to the terrorists on various pretexts.

In its editorial Sunday [12 December], the paper says there Egypt cannot remain quiet or deal normally with parties or elements that seek to shake stability in Egypt or with states that talk about offering political asylum to those who have publicly claimed responsibility for terrorist operations in Egypt.

The paper adds that perhaps Egypt should look for different methods because silence is no longer possible. It notes that the recent terrorist attacks against state officials have shown that there is no doubt about a foreign role in supporting or facilitating terrorist operations carried out for publicity reasons or to cause an uproar in Egypt.

Correspondent Denies Journalists Harassed

NC1112181893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1650 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 11 Dec (MENA)—Mr. Volkhardt Singford, head of the League of Foreign Correspondents in Cairo and correspondent for the German magazine DER SPIEGEL, has denied that any members of the league have had their telephones tapped or have been subjected to any kind of harassment while performing their work as foreign correspondents in Egypt.

In an interview with MENA today, Singford affirmed that the foreign correspondents in Egypt have not been subjected to any form of censorship in their dispatches and that the Egyptians facilitate their work—something that is not available in other countries in the region.

He said that foreign correspondents working in Egypt enjoy many facilities provided by the concerned Egyptian agencies. In addition, they are no longer required to obtain a work permit.

Singford, who has been head of the league for two and a half years, explained that, apart from two minor complaints of no importance, the league has not received any complaints from foreign correspondents in Cairo concerning hindrances in performing their duties.

The British newspaper THE GUARDIAN recently published an article by the newspaper's correspondent in Cairo, which claimed that foreign correspondents in Cairo were being harassed and intimidated by the Egyptian authorities while performing their job.

'AQIDATI Compares Paper to ROSE AL-YUSUF

NC1112130993 Cairo 'AQIDATI in Arabic 7 Dec 93 p 6

[Basyni al-Halawani column: "This Is Their Civilization and This Is Our Extremism."]

[Text] It seems we live in an age of wonders and contradictions, an age in which facts are turned upside down, concepts are distorted, and principles are lost in the midst of the struggle of thoughts and ideologies. ROSE AL-YUSUF has become the guardian of virtues and principles in Egypt.

This is a fact and not an illusion. We are witnessing a strange attempt to deliberately confuse concepts and norms. According to ROSE AL-YUSUF, devoutness has become extremism and renunciation of all virtues and principles has become progress. Attacks on religion and its symbols are considered freedom of thought and expression. Stabbing Islam, its shari'ah, and history has become a means to achieve fame, earn illegal money, and stand on the platforms of thought and culture in our country.

In the eyes of the advocates of progress and the guardians of thought and creativity, we are extremists because we believe in Islam as a creed, shari'ah, and a way of life. We are backward because we call on people to adhere to religious values and teachings.

They are progressive because they attack Islam and try to isolate it from our life. They attack its advocates and symbols and accuse them of backwardness, fanaticism, and not catching up with the age.

We are fanatics and advocates of extremism and even "terrorism" because we spread enlightened Islamic thought and culture and because we tell the people through the religious scholars what is right and what is wrong. They are open-minded and civilized because they encourage the likes of Nasr Abu-Zayd to defame Islam.

We are extremists because we do not understand Islam correctly as ROSE AL-YUSUF understands it and because we warn the people against moral dissolution and ideological and behavioral deviations. They are civilized because they believe the best way to protect our youths from extremism is to drown them in a sea of sex, forbidden liaisons, and erotica.

We are extremists because we stress to all Egyptians that Islam calls for tolerance of the people of The Book [the Bible], that it guarantees the rights of non-Muslims, and calls for coexistence with them in an atmosphere of harmony, amity, and common work. They are the guardians of the homeland and the protectors of Egypt's security and stability and this requires them to sow discord between some of the callers and churchmen, as they did with Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Kafi.

We are extremists because we have stressed through all the scholars of Islam that the gap is wide between devoutness on one side and extremism and terrorism on the other. They are civilized because they have placed His Eminence the Grand Imam [of al-Azhar] in the same category with 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman.

This is the civilization of ROSE AL-YUSUF and this is the extremism of 'AQIDATI.

Minister on Military Industries' Production

NC1312082993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 12 Dec (MENA)—Dr. Muhammad al-Ghamrawi, minister of state for war production, has affirmed that military plants meet all our armed forces' needs for ammunition, artillery, main battle tanks, and other weapons.

During an inspection tour of a number of military plants today, Dr. al-Ghamrawi said that these plants represent a national asset that Egypt can be proud of. The plants' activities extend to civilian production. They produce machines and equipment for factories, as well as modern consumer products at suitable prices and according to the highest standards of quality.

The state minister for war production said that there is great interest in developing military production. He emphasized the importance of coordination between the management of Armed Forces' data systems and the data and computer center at the War Production Ministry.

Study Shows Increase in Debt, Treasury Bills

NC1012133293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0934 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 10 Dec (MENA)—A study prepared by the Consultative Council on the volume of internal debts and treasury bills in the first stage of the economic reform program indicates an increase in these debts in the past few years. At the beginning of the current year, the debts reached 105 billion Egyptian pounds. This amount represents the debts owed by the government and the public institutions in the service and economic sectors to the Central Bank and other domestic lending institutions.

The study notes that according to the Central Bank's figures, domestic debts during fiscal year 1991/92 increased by 7.3 billion pounds, as opposed to 22.2 billions in fiscal year 1990/91. At the end of fiscal year 1992, the volume of treasury bills stood at 17.1 billion pounds.

The study recommends a cutback on the reliance on domestic debts, since servicing these debts is as burdensome as foreign debts. The study states the need for the government and public sector agencies to pay these debts from their own resources.

Petroleum, Gas Sales Figures Reported

NC1112183393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1407 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 11 Dec (MENA)—According to a report submitted for discussion today at a meeting of the general assemblies of the Petroleum Ministry's public sector petroleum companies, these companies' output for 1992-93 amounted to 2.725 billion pounds. This was 21 percent higher than expected and 14 percent higher than the previous year.

The Public Sector's exports of petroleum derivatives was 1.348 billion pounds, percent higher than planned and than the total exports in 1991-92. [sentence as received]

Petroleum Minister Hamdi al-Banbi said in the report that the sale of butane gas was 1 million tons in 1992-93, compared with 920,000 tons in 1991-92, for an increase of 11 percent.

The sales of natural gas amounted to 10 billion and 500,000 cubic meters [figures as received], representing an increase of 16 percent over sales in 1991-92.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Interviewed on U.S., Other Issues

94AF0050A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 5 Dec 93 pp 24-30

[Interview with Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Rashid and 'Abd-al-Latif al-Manawi: "Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi Confesses: 'I Have Matured, and Found that Coups and Revolutions Have Not Gotten Us What We Wanted'"]

[Text] An interview with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi does not end, because he is the originator of politics unlike conventional politics. For approximately a quarter century, the period he has ruled since leading the 1969 coup, Libya has been a modern axis of Arab political struggle. Today it is the focus of global concern, being the object of an air embargo imposed against it as one of several sanctions designed to pressure the extradiction of two Libyans accused of blowing up the American Pan Am airplane over the Scottish town of Lockerbie. Only a short while back, as well, world wire services carried news of a major attempted military mutiny inside the country. So it was a journalistic imperative to visit Libya, to find what is happening there. An interview with the Libyan colonel, who insists that he is not a president, was basic to this coverage. Given its importance, we are printing it despite its length; it is notable for personal confessions we rarely hear from the Libyan leader.

[AL-MAJALLAH] We begin with the deadlocked Lockerbie affair. Will you hand over the Libyans accused of the bombing, or not?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] It is up to America and Britain. Those two countries are now ignoring the Montreal Accord, which was signed by all the countries in the world. This agreement deals with air crashes; when the accident occurs, then the accused or the criminal is tried in the country where he is, or in the country that owned the plane, or the country where the accident occurred. Except that the stand of these two countries is steadfastly against the Montreal Accord.

The second aspect of the Lockerbie case is that the charge against two ordinary people was submitted to the international Security Council, which is not in conformity with the powers of this Council, which has nothing to do with civilian cases. There are many plane crashes—why was this one brought before the Council? Also, this case was put under Section Seven, in violation of the United Nations charter itself. This section has a relevance when global peace is threatened, if a war breaks out or there is a threat of war. This section speaks clearly of a state of war. So this is an unjust process.

The strange thing is that the thing called Israel is exempted from Section Seven, which speaks specifically of the measures it employs, such as its occupation of Arab lands, and despite that they refuse to apply it. This is a comedy, a farce, and an obvious game with the UN charter. The dangerous thing in this section of the charter, being used against us, is that it is binding on all countries. If a country does not withdraw from the land it occupied, then the UN may form a military force to force it to withdraw. It is not within the UN's powers to deal with the Lockerbie incident, nor to deal with it under Section Seven, but it has become a case. God will be the victor.

They are violating human rights, while mouthing off about them. Don't our children have human rights protected by the law, such as not being forced to appear before a court in which they will be defamed, and being given the option of a fair trial? It is the right of the accused to reject a judge if he says he was a prior enemy of his, or whether there is some vendetta between him and the judge.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Didn't you err in the way you dealt with the case?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] The sanctions on Libya are unjust. There is no fair reason for them. If we had forbidden the accused from turning themselves in, or rejected or refused to deal with the case, there might have been some reason for these actions against us. But when we were told the names of the accused, we took it upon ourselves to acknowledge their presence, even though there are thouands of people named 'Abd-al-Basit. And when we were told there was a trial, we accepted the principle of a trial. We made no error, but we ask that it be a fair trial, and that it be in a third country.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Brother Mu'ammar, aren't you afraid that one of your security agencies actually did do the bombing?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] My brother, it is a question of agreeing upon a trial, and it is the trial that will make it clear whether one agency or another did it, or who did it. There are lots of plane crashes. The Iranians have a vendetta, as America shot down one of their planes in 1986. Whole families were killed in that attack. We were attacked on the charge of having bombed a nightclub in Berlin, and now they admit that Libya had nothing to do with that incident. We would, in turn, like to see an investigation. Why were we attacked unjustly?

[AL-MAJALLAH] Have you moved to question the suspects in the Lockerbie case to find out the truth?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] When the countries involved rejected a public, open trial, there was no longer any reason for questioning.

Dimensions of the Trial

[AL-MAJALLAH] Can we expect other concessions from you in this pending case?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] We have already made the most significant and extreme concession: our consent to have them tried in a third country, to be approved by the accused. We will not force them to appear before a court where they do not wish to appear.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Why aren't you allowing the international media to talk to the suspects and explain their positions themselves?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Their lawyers have their own views; they prefer for them to give their evidence at trial at the appropriate time, not now.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Have you contacted the victims of the incident to explain this position to them?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] We have not tried to do that. The truth is that the victims of the plane would lose in this way being pursued now, because the case has been politicized. Thus the families of the victims will lose an opportunity for punishment and the right to compensation. The truth of the matter is that they have become victims twice, first with the death of their relatives in the bombing, and then again in the poliical game of the interrogation.

We say that it is a civilian case and should go to trial, with the suspects tried, never mind where. A trial in Britain or America means no trial at all.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Brother Mu'ammar, are you afraid that this trial might lead to the trial of senior Libyan officials as well?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] We do not reject a trial, and we are not afraid. Let it happen in any third country that the suspects and lawyers accept. If we were afraid, we would have refused to have them tried anywhere.

[AL-MAJALLAH] So, the problem is political, as you say. If you were asked to offer political concessions, including for you personally to resign your leadership, would you accept the principle of negotiation in this matter?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] (Laughs) Here we demand the resignation of the presidents of America, Britain, and France, and the resignation of their ruling parties. They must introduce a new basis upon which disputes may be settled and reconciliation achieved. We also have our demands, for the red Indians, Blacks, and Arabs of America, and other oppressed minorities.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Are the Libyan adventures we have seen in the past now at an end?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Libya has a revolution but no adventures. A quarter century after this revolution, it has matured. We are not now what we were in 1969. I was a first lieutenant, not a colonel, when I led the revolution. When I led Libya at the time, I led it with the mentality of a young man, the mentality of a first lieutenant. For that reason, you cannot compare that period to the present.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Could you explain to us the difference between the youthful era of the past and the present mature era?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] In the past, we strove for the revolution for the sake of establishing Arab unity, for example. We strove for a call to war to liberate Palestine, but the state of revolutions in the Arab nation in the past, and since then, proved that it was not necessary to have a coup in order to achieve these aims. I have seen five or six coups, in Mauritania, Yemen, and Sudan. I have seen the change of rulers. It has happened in Yemen, with Salim al-Bid, Salih, 'Ali 'Antar, 'Abd-al-Fattah, al-Ghashmi, and al-Hamdi. They were all my contemporaries. In Sudan, there was al-Numayri, al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, Suwar al-Dhahab, and Silver Bangle (laughs) [Q's joke: Suwar al-Dhahab's name means gold bangle—Tr.] and God willing silver is as far as it will go. I have seen coups, assassinations and changes, but they did not result in solutions. What can be developed are these regimes, to become more like Europe, that is, to achieve a unity of conviction. This conviction could lead us to chamge the charter of the Arab League, and establish unity in economy and defense. Everyone would stay where he is: the king remains king, the president remains president, the sultan remains sultan. It has been proved to us that symbols are not the answer. As to the Palestine war—look at South Africa. There was a solution there without a war, after I had been saying that the whites should be wiped out. It is not necessary to wage war to liberate Palestine. If the Palestinian people go back to their land, and there are five or six million in a state with the Jews, in a democratic framework, then there is a solution.

Even in America, we draw no distinction between Democrats and Republicans, or in Britain between Labor and the Conservatives. We know that there is Likud and the Labor Party in Israel. Abu-'Ammar shook Rabin's hand, and these changes make one stand before the fact, not ignore it.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Do you agree to deal with the new world reality?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Yes and no. Now we have become politicians and diplomats and even profiteers. The important thing is to reach our goal. In the past, we saw negotiating as a blunder, and went through the looking-glass.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How can you speak of practicality, when a few days ago you threatened to burn Libya's oil wells, which isn't very practical?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Practicality and revolution can be combined. If it weren't for oil, they would never have pursued us in the Lockerbie affair. If it weren't for oil, they would not have built their bases in our country—we used to have five foreign bases in Libya. If oil is a source of danger, we will burn it. But not the way the Iraqis burned the Kuwaiti oil wells; we would burn them in such a way that production could never be resumed.

Gaza and Jericho

[AL-MAJALLAH] If 'Arafat sent you an invitation to visit Gaza and Jericho, would you accept it?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] (Laughs) That is journalistic provocation. We will put that aside until it happens. The Palestinian state is still in a plane—still up in the air.

[AL-MAJALLAH] You made statements about expelling the Palestinians.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] To their country, if their state is realized. Gaza and Jericho are a step towards their return, as they have announced. If the Palestinians go there, that is support for the accord. The solution is the return of the Palestinians, that is our dream. If they go back to Gaza and Jericho, then that would be the first time we'd be seeing the portents of return.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Would you accept an invitation from Israeli officials to visit Israel, or for them to visit Libya?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] I do not recognize Israel. It came into being as a country as a reaction to Hitler. It was established in Palestine and its destiny is to disappear. It's like the establishment of an Islamic state in Europe: time would eliminate it, as is now happening with the Bosnian state—and Albania's turn will come, and Macedonia's, even the gates of Turkey. Israel's establishment of a state for the Jews in Palestine is a plot against the Jews themselves, to get rid of them. Even the Ethiopians sent their Jews there to get rid of them. Thus, to protect the Jews as people, I do not encourage them to establish a state in Palestine. There are Jewish religious organizations who agree with what I'm saying, because they know that it is the fate of the Jews to live scattered through the world.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Was your meeting with the Libyan Jews, to compensate them, a prelude to seeking a solution to the Lockerbie problem?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] If Lockerbie had been the problem, then why didn't they solve it? We have 100,000 Libyan Jews in Palestine, 4,000 Jews in Italy, and Italians of Libyan extraction, and all of them are oppressed. They are the ones who came and asked us to do something for them.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Would you allow them to return?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Yes.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Have any of them returned?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] No. I believe that it is up to all the Jews to go back to their countries, like Yemen, Russia, America, and the other places. I do not hate Jews, but I am against the occupation of Palestine—even if the occupiers had been Muslims from Pakistan. I am against it. The West wants to get rid of Jews. I read what Oliver North said in his book, that he would like to be rid of Israel and its expenses, which are a burden on his country.

[AL-MAJALLAH] You have made attempts at unity with Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, and others, all of which failed. Is the problem your method, or that unity is a dream that has gone?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] It has been proved to me that the West does not respect the Arabs; it despises them, and the Lockerbie problem brought shame on the Arabs. No Arab country was able to intervene. This failure to achieve unity has made us impotent in major issues. Without unity, we have failed to achieve development. Because they are unable to achieve a minimum of unity, what we are seeing is a failure leading to violence and revenge. Violent Arab movements use our failure to justify their actions. I have met some of the leaders of Islamic movements, and they tell me, "Why do you defend these regimes? They are incapable of achieving their will, or Palestine, or unity, or even amending the charter of the Arab League."

The truth is that I do not trust organizations that call themselves Islamic. We are worried that the West might be behind them, especially when we see their leaders under the protection of the American, British, French, and German intelligence services.

[AL-MAJALLAH] But the Algerian government accuses you of supporting the opposition Islamist movement. How do you explain this contradiction?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] My Algerian brothers know our position very well. We know that they are trying to please the West at our expense. We don't blame them, because we understand the problem they have, and that they want to sacrifice us. We have made sacrifices together, in the war of liberation, and today they are putting us in the cannon's mouth. Everyone who has a problem with the West says "I am against al-Qadhdhafi," and they come and pat them on the back and make friends with them. If hurting us helps them, they are welcome to do it.

The Libyan Opposition

[AL-MAJALLAH] What about the Libyan opposition?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] No. There is no opposition. Power is in the people's hands, and so whoever is in opposition is opposed to the people. The ones you are speaking about are the agents of foreign intelligence. And because they cannot say that they are agents, they have to say that they are dissidents. They write reports against us and supply information against us. We know what they say and we know who their helpers are.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Why don't you reconcile with them?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] If they repent and stop serving foreign intelligence, and come home to their country, I don't think anyone will hurt them. Some of them have come back sorry, and no one has bothered them. They basically are Muslim brothers. Some of them were fleeing the compulsory draft. Some of them lost their property, which was confiscated from them for the good of the people, who were resentful.

[AL-MAJALLAH] But, as we know, there is no smoke without fire. What is the story with this mutiny in the armed forces in Libya which was reported a few weeks ago?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] First of all, we have no armed forces, but an armed populace which undertakes popular maneuvers. We have one or two million people trained in the use of arms. The mutiny story is a lie. Plus—a coup against whom? If anyone occupied the radio station the people would just laugh at them. This tale reminds me of the story of Brigadier General al-Ahdab in Lebanon, who mounted a coup and went to the television station, proclaimed his coup, and gave orders, but the people laughed at him. No one listened to him. So he withdrew and went home and vanished in embarrassment. If anyone attempted a coup in Libya, he would be sent to a mental asylum. Committees and conferences are everywhere. I have no connection with power, not do I have any administrative or political powers. So—a coup against whom?

The report of the coup is a cheap espionage lie. They mentioned the names of dead military mutineers, so I took them with me to Cairo. I said to everyone, "These are the ones the BBC mentioned, saying that they had led a coup and were killed." I presented them, alive, to the press. I know who provided that report. He is a spy in Cairo, so that his story conforms to the embargo and Western pressure. The BBC announced that.

[AL-MAJALLAH] The BBC says that you are jamming its Arabic broadcasts. Is that true?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] (Laughs) What happened is that cables and phone calls deluged the radio station and Libyan entities, demanding that steps be taken against them to punish them for that false report. There were 150 phone calls in one day from throughout Libya, especially from the region of Misratah, where it was alleged the mutiny took place. They demanded the punishment of this lying radio station.

Here I may say that, to absorb this anger, these agencies began to jam the BBC, to assuage people's wrath. As for me personally, I am against jamming radio transmissions.

[AL-MAJALLAH] The respected WASHINGTON POST said that the reason for the mutiny in the Libyan army was that their salaries had not been paid—

[Al-Qadhdhafi] [Interrupting] You said the WASHINGTON POST is respected? It's not respected or anything else. There is no true democracy in the West, nor freedom of the press, nor freedom of broadcast. I have had a personal experience I can tell you about, which taught me this fact. A correspondent of the British TIMES asked me for an article they would print. When I sent it to them, they did not print it, and when I asked their correspondent about it, he told me that the government did not allow it.

As to the BBC, British government agencies established it, aiming at the Arabs during World War II, to counterbalance Radio Berlin, which was broadcasting in Arabic. They had a program presented by Yunis al-Bahri, called "Arab Greetings from Berlin."

The funny thing is that the Arab governments get angry when we broadcast a radio item about the BBC, and threaten to break off relations with us. And yet no one threatens the British when they broadcast the item. The American television station CNN conducted an interview with me, but when I said that we were waiting for President Clinton to become like Soviet Premier Gorbachev and free the American masses, they cut that part out and did not broadcast it. They also cut my message to the families of the victims of the Lockerbie incident, because the U.S. Department of State was afraid that they, the families, would turn on them. That was on ABC television. The reason, as they told me, was that what I said damaged American security. These newspapers and broadcast are all governmental. And this foreigner complex we have.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Will we see you, in the future, in the White House garden reconciling with the Americans, the same way we saw 'Arafat with Clinton?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] I have no problem. I am ready to make up with the Americans. The fact is that I respect President Clinton, even though I curse former President Ronald Reagan. I did not like President Bush, but there was respect between us. We have nothing against Clinton; I like and respect him. His record is not black. He is an honest man, and he was against the Vietnam war. He was not to blame. His is a peaceful man, not an evil one.

The Serbs and Other Issues

[AL-MAJALLAH] We were surprised by the fact that Libya received and welcomed the Serbian foreign minister in spite of their policies, and their actions against the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. How do you justify that?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] The Serbs are our friends. We are against one person: the leader of the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He is a butcher, and has hurt the Serbs and the historic relations between the orthodox Christians and the Muslims there. What happened was a plot. We are with Federal Yugoslavia.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How are your relations with your brothers the Arab leaders of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and with Abu-'Ammar?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] I have a strong relationship with my brother President Husni Mubarak, and our relations with Egypt are strong and substantial. We have great mutual interests.

King Fahd is my brother and friend, and we like one another. There is more courtesy between us than between any other Arab rulers, and we talk like brothers. The fact is that the situation in the Arab region does not permit joint action. There is a "veto" against Arab action and no one can fight it.

Abu-'Ammar always used to visit me, but since he signed the Gaza-Jericho agreement there has not been any contact. We have not recognized the agreement, because we do not know what is behind these negotiations. They were secret, in Norway. But we did recognize the Madrid talks, because they were open and public.

[AL-MAJALLAH] There is talk of conflict inside the Libyan leadership, with 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud and al-Khuwayldi.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Neither of us has any political authority; that is the way Libya is governed. We are away from the country for a year or two, or ten years, and no one asks for our signature on a decision. Everything is in the hands of committees and conferences. The people are content with us as leaders of the revolution, and there is nothing to disagree with us about because we have no power.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What about tribal influence on local politics?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] No one can alter the natural social structure in a short time; not only in Libya, but in the whole world. It is subject to change after a long period of political interactions, but there is no political role for tribes in Libya. The role of tribes is limited to social matters. If there is a role, it is for the popular conferences and committees, but tribes have no political purpose.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Why aren't your children seen?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] The grown ones are studying in public educational institutions inside Libya.

[AL-MAJALLAH] We have read some of your efforts to write short stories. Why did you stop?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] I have a collection of stories that will appear soon. The title is *The Village is the Village, The Land is the Land: The Suicide of an Astronaut*, with other stories. I've also written some poetry.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Who is your favorite poet?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] When I was a student, I loved the poetry of Sulayman al-'Isa. Now, I prefer pre-Islamic poetry. The truth is that later—modern—poetry is laughable. Nizar Qabbani is an excellent poet, but he's uneven. One is embarrassed to read his poetry.

Al-Qadhdhafi Gives Speech in Warshaffanah

LD1312232693

[Editorial Report] Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic at 2131 GMT on 13 December begins carrying a speech by Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in Warshaffanah on 12 December.

Al-Qadhdhafi begins by praising the alertness and perception of the Warshaffanah citizens and the bravery of the Libyan people. He says the Libyan people want to live in peace, but the colonialists are adventurers. They protect their lackeys and attack the revolutionaries, but they do not want to lose. They are afraid of anyone who resists them. He says they are afraid of Cuba and Somalia.

Al-Qadhdhafi says the colonialists now know that it is not Al-Qadhdhafi who is resisting them, but the masses of the Libyan people. They know that the Libyan people are ready to resist.

He speaks about traitors and the fact that the people are rejecting them.

He says everyone should join the resistance against the attack on Libya. He says everyone should warn his family against greed, the dollar, and over-consumption. The best thing is to live with a clear conscience.

Al-Qadhdhafi then talks about agriculture and oil production.

He then turns to the subject of the member of (?Ja'akah) family who gave information to the CIA, how the people wanted to kill the whole family, and how the family disowned him.

Opposition Leader Disappears in Cairo

NC1312190893 London MBC Television in Arabic 1820 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] A source in the Arab Human Rights Organization today stated that Libyan opposition figure Mansur al-Kikhya disappeared more than two days ago in Cairo, where he was taking part in the organization's conference. Al-Kikhya is the secretary general of the Libyan opposition group and a former Libyan foreign minister. A spokesman for the National Front for the Salvation of Libya in London has stated that he believes that elements hired by the Libyan government have kidnapped him.

Tripoli yesterday threatened to eliminate opposition figures in exile and sanctioned the murder of former Libyan Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Huni.

Mauritania

President Taya Begins Official Visit to France

AB1412124093 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in French 1930 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpt] President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya arrived in Paris a short while ago, to begin a 3-day official visit to France. Here is a report from Paris by Mohamed Varoun Ahmed, our special correspondent from national television.

[Begin Ahmed recording] The head of state began a 3-day official visit to France this evening. He arrived here a few minutes ago and was welcomed by Cooperation Minister Michel Roussin, as well as Arab and African ambassadors accredited to France. This visit crowns sustained efforts by Paris and Nouakchott to establish trustworthy relations between them.

Relations between France and Mauritania have gone through periods of tension in the past, but it is now time to dispel those misunderstandings in order to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation based on respect. France rightly appreciates the democratic process embarked upon and carried through by Mauritania to lay the foundation for a law-abiding country. It especially appreciates the way in which economic and political reforms were instituted in an atmosphere of stability, social peace, and harmony, which is very rare in Africa and even elsewhere, where democratic transitions are carried out amid violence and pain. Mauritania, for its part, appreciates the French perception of our country's characteristics as well as the role it plays and continues to play in drawing Maghreb and West African countries closer.

As of tomorrow, the head of state's discussions with the most senior French authorities will focus on relations between France and Mauritania. The French authorities seem willing to take advantage of this visit to strengthen cooperative ties between the two countries, especially in the economic sector. It is known that French investors, who have not been present on the Mauritanian scene for a long time, now hope to undertake business links with our country, which now presents all the necessary assurances as borne out by the recent French week organized in Nouakchott in which 30 French companies took part. Furthermore, Paris will, for some time, become the cultural capital of Mauritania. The Institute of the Arab world will, as of tomorrow, host a cultural exhibition on Mauritania. The opening ceremony will be chaired by the head of state. [end recording]

In an exclusive statement to a MAURITANIAN NEWS AGENCY special correspondent, French Cooperation Minister Michel Roussin pointed out that relations between Mauritania and France are excellent. He further stated that Mauritania is one of the rare African countries with whom France works with trust. It has confidence in its policy and its ability to set up fruitful cooperation based on concrete dossiers with satisfactory results. The French Foreign Ministry spokesman said France is pleased with progress being made in efforts to make Mauritania a law-abiding country since democracy was instituted and multiparty elections were held there in January 1992. [passage omitted]

Taya Receives Message From Tunisian President

LD1112215893 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2030 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, his excellency the president of the republic, received at noon today Sadok Fayala, secretary of state to the foreign minister for African affairs, who delivered a message from Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, his excellency the Tunisian president.

The meeting was attended by Shaykh Ould Ali, secretary of state for Arab Maghreb affairs, and Mohamed H'sairi, Tunisian ambassador to our country.

Following the meeting, Fayala made a statement to our colleague (?Isalmou) Ould Ahmed Mahmoud:

[Begin Sadok recording] I was honored to meet his excellency President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya and conveyed the warm cordial regards from his brother his excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and delivered to him a written message within the framework of the excellent relations that link the Mauritanian and Tunisian peoples, and within the context of the Maghreb joint consultations and work. President Taya entrusted me with a message of appreciation and greetings to his brother President Ben Ali. [end recording]

Malian Tuareg Leader Visits, Views Coup Plot

AB1312164493 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 1830 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Secretary General Mohamed Ag Sidi Rissa, of the Unified Movement and Front of Azaouad [MFUA], has paid a visit to Mauritania as part of a sensitization tour of West Africa on the need for governments of the subregion to contribute to the resolution of the conflict between the Malian Government and the Tuareg rebellion. Mohamed Ag Sidi Rissa deplores especially the delay in the implementation of the National Pact signed with the Bamako authorities. The MFUA secretary general has also reacted to the coup attempt in Bamako. Let us listen to him talking to Salem Zoum Salem, our correspondent in Nouakchott.

[Begin recording] [Rissa] We are still bent on not encouraging this system of coup attempts, especially when there is talk of democratically elected presidents, but we are equally obliged to say that we the people of Azaouad have been marginalized from the colonial era to date. We of MFUA wonder when we will have confidence in the multiple changes of regime which simply constitute a race for power.

[Salem] So, in your view, even if there is a change in government that does not mean that the Tuareg problem will soon be solved.

[Rissa] Last time, it was said that the Tuareg problem would perhaps be solved, because they talked to us about democracy. What I know is that democracy cannot exist so long as it is not founded on any ideology. Today, what Africans lack is a system of societal development in arid regions like ours, in particular the lack of the possibility to live in a democratic entity. This is what is lacking today. It is not the race for power.

[Salem] You are touring certain West African capitals in order to draw international public opinion to your people and the Tuareg problem in Mali. In regard to the National Pact you signed with the Malian authorities, what is the current situation?

[Rissa] Today, we are still waiting. We still do not have a definite deadline. I think there is likely to be a certain delay that will drag on, and I think we need a gesture of goodwill to help us believe that there will be an improvement in the situation otherwise we will be locked up in a risky situation that will complicate matters. [end recording]

Morocco

Israeli National Bank Chief Pays Visit

LD1412140093 Rabat MAP in English 1222 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Rabat, Dec. 14 (MAP)—Chief and managing director of the Israeli Leumi [National] Bank Moshe Sanbar is currently visiting Morocco to explore the possibility to sign an accord with the 'Bank Commerciale du Maroc' (BCM), Moroccan business weekly 'LA VIE ECONOMIQUE' reported. The BCM, the first Moroccan private bank, had already signed with Leumi accords on banking correspondence, during an informal visit of Moroccan businessmen to al-Quds [Jerusalem]. Leumi operates in direct investments in tourism and insurance realms.

BCM was also courted by the Israeli Hapoalem [Workers] Bank, the first Israeli private bank, the weekly said. Some Palestinian businessmen are currently examining ways to set up a joint financial holding with the Israeli and Moroccan groups respectively 'Koor' and 'Omnium Nord Africain' (ONA) and the Spanish Benesto Bank, 'LA VIE ECONOMIQUE' said.

Niger President Arrives in Rabat on Visit

AB1112183093 Niamey Voix du Sahel Network in French 1900 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] President Mahamane Ousmane arrived in Rabat this afternoon on a friendly, working visit to Morocco. He told the press that he came to present his respects to King Hassan II and to explore ways and means of strengthening cooperation between the two countries. Niger and Morocco are bound together by a friendship and cooperation treaty which envisages agreements in the technical, economic, scientific, and cultural fields. These agreements concern air transportion and trade, (?among others). Under the trade agreement, Niger is to export copper to Morocco, but despite the numerous [word indistinct], cooperation between Niger and Morocco has remained modest [words indistinct] the Ministry of Cooperation. So, the head of state's visit to Morocco will certainly give a new impetus to this cooperation.

Hassan Meets Congo, Niger Presidents

LD1312232793 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] His Majesty King Hassan II, may God make him victorious, this afternoon received at the Royal Palace in Bouznika Congolese President Pascal Lissouba, who was accompanied by his Foreign Affairs Minister Benjamin Bounkoulou, and held political talks with him. The royal audience was attended by Abdellatif Filali, the minister of state for foreign affairs and cooperation.

Following the talks, his majesty, who was accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, bade farewell to his noble guest.

His majesty gave the press mission accompanying the Congolese president a statement, in which his majesty highlighted the will of Morocco and Congo to consolidate cooperation and look for developing its levels.

In a reply to a question about the situation in Congo, his majesty expressed his hope that the Congolese people would for the future's sake and for the sake of building the country in the shadow of peace and respect.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified Correspondent in French] So c[illegible] we thus count on Morocco?

[Hassan in French] I am not going to interfere in your affairs, but I will be there to help in everything that can assist Congo in improving itself. [end recording]

The noble monarch also received Niger President Mahamane Ousmane. This reception was attended by Niger Foreign Minister Abdourahamane Hama, and for the Moroccan side by Abdellatif Filali, minister of state for foreign affairs and cooperation.

Following the reception the noble monarch, accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, bade farewell to his esteemed guest.

His majesty gave a statement to the Niger press mission accompanying President Mahamane Ousmane, in which his majesty said that his meeting with the president of Niger had allowed them to come to know one another, and that it was a meeting to discuss the well-established relations existing between Morocco and Niger. His majesty and President Ousmane discussed not only the present level of relations, but the scope of developing them to include different spheres. His majesty hopes that relations will respond to the aspirations of the two countries' peoples.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent in French] What are the prospects for cooperation?

[Hassan in French] They will be what we make of them, and I hope that they will be up to the ambitions and hopes of our respective peoples. [end recording]

PPS Paper Condemns Libyan Remarks Against West

LD1412142793 Rabat MAP in English 1257 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Rabat, Dec. 14 (MAP)—Moroccan 'AL BAYANE' daily criticized Monday Libyan officials' virulent statements against Western officials as inappropriate stances that will only harm the Libyan people. The daily of the leftist Party for Progress and Socialism [PPS] calls the Libyan officials to be moderate and sensible arguing that all insults and vain threats will not solve the crisis. On the contrary, the daily warns, they are widely publicized by the Western media to prepare the international opinion to new attacks against the Libyan people.

The daily also recalls that since tighter sanctions were enforced on the Libyan people this December 1st, sincere friends of Libya have been claiming the lifting of the unfair blockade. Citing its onw example, the daily said it had denounced the Western aggression as a 'revenge that will in no way settle the crisis and promote the respect by all of principles of international legality'.

Sudan

Tribunal Established To Try Former General

EA1312215293 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0315 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Chief Justice Jalal Ali Lutfi has issued an order establishing a special tribunal to try the accused Al-Hadi Bushra and others charged in the explosives case. The court has been formed and will be presided over by Mr. al-Zubayr Muhammad Khalil, judge of the General Court. The members of the court are: Salah Muhammad Ibrahim (Shabu), a judge of the General Court, and Mr. al- Fatih Hasan Bashir, judge of the criminal court. Mrs. Faridah Ibrahim Ahmad, acting head of the judiciary in Khartoum State, said the court would have the powers of the general criminal court and would embark on its work in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Procedures Act of 1991.

The court will hold its first session at 0900 on Monday, 20 December 1993, under the judicial authority. Its sessions will be public and the accused will be given all opportunities to defend themselves.

UN Criticized Over Human Rights Resolution

EA1212181293 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1030 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 12 Dec (SUNA)—The minister of peace and rehabilitation, Mr. 'Abdallah Deng Niyal, has said that the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on human rights will obstruct peace efforts in Sudan, as it refuses to condemn the rebels despite their violations of human rights, shelling of towns, and the kidnapping of children.

His excellency said in a statement published by AL-NASR today that talks with the al-Nasir group would not stop, as the government intended to continue its contacts with the group to which it was linked by a [word indistinct] agreement. The coming days, he said, could see the reactivation of contacts between the two sides. Mr. Niyal said that reforms and reconstruction were continuing in the south. Infrastructures were being repaired, for example, agriculture, overland roads, and the Juba River port. Juba Airport has had lights installed and has become an international airport. Malakal Airport has also been renovated and its runway extended to receive civilian aircraft.

Egyptian Envoy Explains Absence at UN Vote

EA1012175593 Khartoum SUNA in English 1020 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 10 Dec (SUNA)—The Egyptian ambassador to Sudan, Hasan Jad-al-Haq, explained that Egypt did not vote against the Sudan regarding the recent U.N. resolution on alleged human rights abuses in the Sudan. He states that the Egyptian delegation to the general assembly absented itself for the meeting assigned (?for) voting in accordance with instructions from Cairo.

Vice President Reaffirms Support for Iraq

JN1212190293 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 12 Dec (INA)—Sudanese Vice President Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih has hailed the defiant posture of the Iraqi people, as well as their determination, under His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, to defend Iraq and the Arab nation, as was manifested in their confrontation of the most ferocious aggression launched against the Arabs and Muslims by the United States and its allies.

In a statement to the INA correspondent in Khartoum, Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih affirmed that the support of Sudan—government and people—for the Iraqi people and their just struggle to uphold their national and pan-Arab cause has been repeatedly expressed. He added that this support reflects Sudan's independent and firm course with regard to adherence to principles. This support, he noted, also reflects Arab nobility in handling the Arab nation's fateful pan-Arab causes.

The Sudanese vice president went on to say: Arab and Islamic history will never forgive the Arabs for their failure to support the Iraqi people. It will never forgive them for their failure to do anything to address the difficulties and afflictions plaguing the Iraqi people as a result of the continuation of the unfair embargo.

The Sudanese vice president said: The Arab regimes which are acting in line with the dictates of the new world order and mobilizing their resources to serve the Arab nation's enemies are not immortal. They will continue to be forsaken by their peoples, he noted.

Al-Zubayr added: The hostile and malicious maneuvers and machinations being used by the enemies of Iraq to toughen and perpetuate the embargo, particularly in the areas of civilian and humanitarian supplies, are meant to achieve political purposes that have nothing to do with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr commended the reconstruction effort currently under way in Iraq, as well as the great accomplishments the Iraqis have made in the course of their efforts to rebuild their homeland, affirming that these accomplishments will remain an epitome of national and pan-Arab resistance, flying in the face of despotism and colonialism. This is to the credit of the Iraqi people's struggle, he maintained.

Government Reaches Aviation Agreement With Oman

EA1012181193 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0315 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Mr. Abdullah Safi al-Nur, general manager of the Republic Corporation of Civil Aviation, stated that a bilateral agreement between Sudan and the Sultanate of Oman comes within the framework of a joint cooperation agreement between the two countries in the field of air transportation. He explained that flights in the past used to proceed through a method of temporary permits. He further clarified that the agreement included all clauses and articles that regulate air traffic control, the number of flights allowed, and customs and tax transactions and air transportion security.

He explained that it has been agreed to operate three flights by the airlines concerned on each side. The coming period will witness fruitful cooperation in this field, particularly with regard to the exchange of experience in the fields of maintenance, employment and investment, to realize common interests in aviation services between the two countries.

Parliament Discusses Steps To Improve Security

EA1312181593 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Brigadier 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, the interior minister, this morning briefed the Transitional National Assembly [TNA], meeting under the chairmanship of Mr. Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, on his ministry's general policies and past achievements. These achievements had been realized in accordance with the guidelines of the national comprehensive strategy plan the objectives of which had been transformed into realities, such as legal reform, overall control of security, and the establishment of military points linked by an integrated communications network.

He also referred to supplying police stations with qualified graduate cadres from the police college to enhance performance, as well as with national service and convict [as heard] recruits after being trained. His excellency also reviewed other areas, such as the condition of refugees, the facilitation of referring to confirmatory documents, services, and studying external and internal borders.

The TNA also ratified the temporary order on the military industrialization authority act presented by Major General Muhammad Abdullah Uwaydah, chairman of the TNA's security and defense committee. He said the act would be in conformity with the country's scientific course towards self-reliance and the enhancement of its political, military and economic infrastructures. He stressed that reliance on military industrialization enhanced independence and free decision-making and the fulfillment of the military and technical requirements of the Armed Forces. Such industrialization would also contribute to other advanced stages of industrialization. Uwaydah said the act was designed to develop the inputs availed to scientific research in the manufacture of weapons as well to enhance the proficiency and technical standards of the Armed Forces and the other security and defense forces.

Western Sahara

Polisario Warns Rally Organizers of 'Dangers'

LD0912154493 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] The Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] has urged the organizers of the coming Paris-Dakar [automobile] rally to review their itinerary across the Western Sahara for security reasons. In a communique addressed to the rally organizers and participants, the Polisario delegation in France stressed that the Western Sahara, which was chosen for the passage of the rally—the scene of a sports race—is not only part of Saharan territory, but an invaded country whose inhabitants are suffering from the calamities of the Moroccan occupation.

The communique adds that this sports race should not become a flexible tool in the hands of Moroccan policy which is trying to use it to make international public opinion believe that the Western Sahara is a Moroccan province. The communique concludes that there are dangers in crossing the Western Sahara, which—despite the cease-fire since September 1991—remains a military zone fraught with dangers.

Kuwait

20 Kuwaitis To Be Reunited With Families 15 Dec

LD1412104093 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0713 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 14 Dec (KUNA)—A new group of people will arrive in the State of Kuwait tomorrow to be reunited with their families after being handed over in the 'Ar'ar region of Saudi Arabia. AL-ANBA' newspaper quoted responsible sources as saying that the number of people involved in this family reunification could reach 20 people, 7 of them Kuwaiti men, and 13 females, 2 of whom are Iraqis, 1 Saudi, and the rest Kuwaitis. [passage omitted]

The newspaper added that the secretary general's special envoy on prisoners' affairs will shortly visit Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, to discuss the case of the remaining prisoners and the names included in the list which the Arab League handed over to Iraq previously.

Kenyan President Moi Arrives for Visit

EA1312182293 Nairobi Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Network in English 1300 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpts] His Excellency President Daniel arap Moi arrived this afternoon in Kuwait to a red-carpet welcome by his host, the Kuwaiti leader, His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah. President Moi arrived at the Kuwaiti International Airport at 1 pm. [passage omitted]

President Moi later visited the Kuwaiti Society for the Handicapped and was also expected to hold talks at his residence at Bayan Palace with the Kuwaiti crown prince, Sa'ad al-'Abdullah al-Sabah, who is also the Kuwaiti prime minister, at 6:30 PM. President Moi will also attend a state dinner hosted in his honor by the Kuwaiti emirate leader, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah.

Official Talks Begin

LD1412114593 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, represented his highness the amir, may God preserve him, at this morning's official talks in Bayan Palace with His Excellency President Daniel Arap Moi, president of the Republic of Kenya.

Shaykh Nasir Muhammad al-Ahmad, minister of amiri court affairs, said that the talks concentrated on the development of bilateral relations between the two friendly countries, issues connected with the Horn of Africa, and a number of issues of common interest.

A cordial atmosphere, characterized by understanding and the spirit of friendship, prevailed at the talks.

Opening of 'New Pages' With 'Enemies' Opposed

LD1412093893 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0720 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Kuwait, 14 Dec (KUNA)—A Kuwaiti newspaper today called for not opening any "new pages" with those who supported the Iraqi regime in its aggression on the State of Kuwait unless they apologize and agree to the resolutions of international legitimacy on the demarcation of the border and the release of the prisoners and detainees in Iraqi prisons.

AL-ANBA' newspaper was commenting by that on the recent statement made by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, on not equating "Kuwait's enemies, its friends, and its allies."

AL-ANBA' said that these words "do not lack clarity ... because they express the conscience of every Kuwaiti who lived through the ordeal of the criminal Iraqi occupation of our dear country and suffered the injustice of kinsmen slaying Arabism and Islam on the altar of their great idol Saddam Husayn."

In a reference to the rumors that circulate every now and then calling on Kuwait to open a new page with "Saddam Husayn's supporters and partners in the hideous crime," the newspaper affirmed that "we say it loud and clear ... we do not want to open new pages."

It said that there were 27 international resolutions approved by more than 150 countries "and were only rejected by Saddam's supporters," affirming that "there will never be a new page before they apologize to Kuwait and its people and agree to the resolutions of international legitimacy, those on the demarcation of the border, and the release of our imprisoned sons in the tyrant's jails."

AL-ANBA' concluded its commentary, entitled "Your Words, Chief of Diplomats, Have Told the Truth," by wondering "whether the citizens of the countries participating in the aggression who still reside in Kuwait have apologized for their governments' actions, or have expressed their rejection of that hideous deed."

Qatar

OPEC Chief: Extraordinary Meeting Not Necessary

NC1112212293 Paris AFP in English 2054 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Doha, Dec 11 (AFP)—OPEC members do not need to hold an extraordinary meeting despite the slump in world oil prices, Qatari Energy Minister and OPEC Chairman 'Abdallah al-'Atiyah said Saturday [11 December].

Al-'Atiyah, speaking after talks here with his Algerian counterpart Ahmed Benbitour, said contacts were underway with oil-producing countries outside the

Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries to maintain stability in the oil market.

The Qatari minister said he would visit Oman on Monday as part of OPEC efforts to stabilise prices.

Omani Oil Minister Sa'id al-Shanfari recently rejected accusations by the 12-nation cartel that overproduction by non-OPEC members caused the latest price fall.

Prices have plunged by more than seven dollars below OPEC's benchmark of 21 dollars, the lowest level in five years.

In September the cartel set a production ceiling of 24.5 million barrels per day (bpd) for six months starting on October 1.

The next OPEC summit is due to take place on March 25.

Non-OPEC producers were due to meet in Sanaa in Yemen this month but the talks were postponed until January pending further consultations.

Benbitour later arrived in Abu Dhabi for a brief visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the official Gulf news agency WAM reported.

United Arab Emirates

Yemeni Foreign Minister Arrives on 1-Day Visit

JN1212083193 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0540 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 11 Dec (WAKH)—Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Basindwah arrived in Abu Dhabi today on a 1-day visit to the United Arab Emirates.

In a statement to the Emirates news agency, Basindwah said his country's relations with most Gulf Cooperation Council states have begun to improve. Regarding the crisis in Yemen, Basindwah asserted that his country is working to end this crisis as soon as possible. He pointed to encouraging signs which call for optimism about resolving this crisis very soon.

Basindwah added that the recent statements issued by the Yemeni Socialist Party and the General People's Congress affirmed that there is determination to end all differences through dialogue. Regarding the reports on holding a meeting in Jordan between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Basindwah said he cannot confirm such a meeting.

Bosnian Prime Minister Arrives in Dubayy

JN1112110493 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0958 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Dubayy, 11 Dec (WAKH)—Today, Bosnia-Herzegovina Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic arrived in Dubayy for a 1-day visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. During the visit, Silajdzic will hold talks with UAE officials on bilateral relations and the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Urges Gulf Mediation To Pressure Serbs

NC1212100693 Paris AFP in English 0939 GMT 12 Dec 93

[By Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Dec 12 (AFP)—Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic urged Gulf Arab states on Sunday [12 December] to use their good relations with Europe to pressure the Serbs to accept a peace settlement.

Silajdzic, ending a visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), said he saw no quick solution to the conflict without international pressure, although the warring factions have agreed to resume peace talks later this month.

"Gulf Arab countries have been extending large material aid for us and we are very grateful," he told AFP in an interview.

"But in the current crucial stage, we also need political support. Gulf states have strong ties with the European Community and they can make contacts with it to persuade it to put more pressure on the Serbs," he added.

"We believe that Europe, the United States, the United Nations and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference will not be able to resolve the problem without the use of force against the Serbs or putting pressure on them."

The six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE—has strong trading links with the E.C. and United States, exceeding 60 billion dollars a year.

Ties were boosted after the West played a key role in liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in February 1991.

The Gulf Arabs, who are the main crude oil suppliers to the West, have become the leading donors of relief aid to Bosnian Moslems and have repeatedly called for the Moslems to be excluded from a U.N. arms embargo.

On Saturday, the UAE said it was bringing in another 18 wounded Bosnians for treatment in its hospitals.

The warring parties of the former Yugoslav republic—the Moslem government, Serbs and Croats—are to resume peace negotiations in Geneva on December 21.

Peace envoys David Owen and Thervald Stoltenberg called the new round, which will cover Moslem demands for three to four percent more land seized by the Serbs and for access to the Adriatic sea.

"The latest European proposal for more territorial concessions by the Serbs is logical although it meets only our minimum demands," Silajdzic said.

"But I doubt the Serbs will agree without pressure. Unfortunately, Europe is not putting pressure on them and this makes me pessimistic about a settlement at the next round of negotiations."

Silajdzic, who had talks with UAE Deputy Prime Minister Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan on Saturday, said Bosnians now had a stronger army and the military situation was "much better now than a few months ago."

More than 200,000 Bosnians have been killed since the conflict erupted in early 1992, he said, and lamented support for the Serbs from some European countries.

"Europe must act now," he said. "We are in the 20th century and yet more than 200,000 have been killed in the heart of Europe, which exports democracy and human rights."

Ends Talks, Departs 12 Dec

JN1212151293 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1245 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 12 Dec (WAKH)—Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic left Abu Dhabi at noon today at the end of a two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. He was seen off by Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, UAE deputy prime minister, and a number of ranking officials.

During the visit, the Bosnian prime minister held talks with His Highness Shaykh Sultan Bin-Muhammad Al Qasimi, member of the Supreme Council and ruler of al-Shariqah, and Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan. The talks dealt with developing and strengthening bilateral relations, the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in addition to a number of issues of common interest.

Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan described the talks he held with the Bosnian prime minister as positive and objective. In a statement to the Emirates news agency, he said the Bosnian prime minister briefed him on efforts to end the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the results of these efforts so far. He expressed the hope that all parties will agree to end the fighting, and will positively respond to in order to bring security and stability to the region.

He said a number of current regional issues were also discussed. He reiterated the UAE position in support of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He described the war to which the Bosnian people are subjected as a war of annihilation and ethnic cleansing, adding that it is a dirty war in the real sense of the word.

Yemen

Salih Said To Welcome al-Bid's '18 Points'

PM1312171193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Lutfi Shatarah report: "Early Meeting Between Salih and al-Bid Ruled Out"]

[Excerpts] Aden—Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] sources have ruled out the possibility of a meeting between President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid in the near future, but they said that the fact that the YSP welcomed President Salih's acceptance of the 18 points submitted by al-Bid as a way out of the political crisis was seen as a factor that would facilitate the task of the National Dialogue Committee.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the YSP's Political Bureau has discussed the mechanism for the implementation of the 18 points accepted by President Salih and priorities in the implementation of these points, such as the security aspect, referring to trial those accused of complicity in the political assassination incidents, and moving the military camps and barracks out of the main towns. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Brigadier General Khalid Abu-Bakr Baras, chairman of the preparatory committee for the national meeting of the people of the Hadramaut Governorate, which ended yesterday morning, has denied the claims that Hadramaut was seeking secession from Yemen. He told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the real demand of all the people of Hadramaut was, as strongly reaffirmed during that national meeting, that the introduction of local government with vast financial and administrative powers should be expedited.

Baras said that the meeting resulted in a number of recommendations, including the governorate's people's readiness to participate in consolidating security and stability in cooperation with the security authorities and to increase night watches in the various areas and directorates of and entrances to the governorate. But he denied that that initiative was an attempt to revive the popular militia created by the YSP in the various southern governorates when it was in power before unification. [passage omitted]

YSP Statement Paves Way for Al-Bid, Salih Meeting

PM1412110793 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Faysal Makram and Iqbal 'Abdallah report: "Socialist Party's Position Arouses Satisfaction"]

[Excerpts] Sanaa, Aden—Political sources in Sanaa and Aden said yesterday that the statement issued by the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] Political Bureau on Thursday evening has aroused satisfaction in the country and in practice paved the way for a meeting between Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and YSP Central Committee Secretary General 'Ali Salim al-Bid, who has been secluding himself in Aden since 19 August.

The sources say that the striking point in the statement apart from its "welcome for 'Ali Salih's announcement of the General People's Congress' [GPC] acceptance of the 18 points proposed by the YSP" is the fact that it refers to al-Bid as "deputy chairman of the Presidential Council"—which means that the YSP secretary general is moving toward taking the constitutional oath to exercise his powers in the future. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile 'Abd-al-Salam al-'Anasi, head of the General Department and member of the GPC General Committee, has welcomed the YSP statement. In a statement to AL-HAYAH, he said that "although the GPC still has not been officially notified of the YSP's position, the statement distributed on Thursday evening expresses a position which we had hoped would come from our partner earlier, especially with regard to sitting down at the table of dialogue to look sincerely for ways out of the crisis and work to build a united state through modern means."

Al-'Anasi said: "Without doubt the GPC welcomes what is mentioned in the YSP statement and extends its hand once again to all the good efforts contributing to ending the crisis and surmounting the problems obstructing the efforts to build a unified Yemen at the various levels." He stressed "the GPC's eagerness to respect national constants, constitutional legitimacy, and everyone's right to build and consolidate unity and democracy."

In Aden real signs have begun to emerge on the horizon as regards bringing the political crisis to an end. Opposition sources have pointed out that "the YSP statement, issued the evening before last, has brought about a new atmosphere that is helping the national dialogue committee formed from the coalition and opposition parties and some national figures to resume their dialogues."

The sources emphasized that "the YSP statement has aroused satisfaction and optimism that the crisis is going to be brought to an end and the country spared the specter of partition." [passage omitted]

YSP, GPC Form Committees for Dialogue on Crisis

PM1412143693 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Dec 93 p4

[Reports by Hammud Munsir in Sanaa and Lutfi Shatarah in Aden: "Formation of Committees for Dialogue Between General People's Congress and Yemeni Socialist Party"]

[Excerpt] AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned from well-informed sources that Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister Brigadier General Mujahid Abu-Shawarib returned from Aden to Sanaa the day before yesterday with proposals, described as positive, for the settlement of the political crisis.

The sources confirmed that the signs of relaxation which appeared late last week between the Socialist Party [YSP] and the General People's Congress [GPC] after President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's announcement of his acceptance of the YSP's 18 points and the YSP's welcoming of that acceptance, have led to agreement between the two sides on the main principles for resolving the crisis.

Well-informed political sources in Aden told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the YSP Political Bureau recently formed a five-member committee for dialogue with the GPC. They added that the committee is chaired by Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, head of the YSP Central Committee Secretariat, and includes Prime Minister Engineer Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, Culture Minister Jarallah 'Umar, and Housing Minister Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah Muhsin, all of whom are Political Bureau members.

The GPC's committee for bilateral talks with the YSP is chaired by 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, Presidential Council member and GPC assistant secretary general. Members include First Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Hasan Muhammad Makki, Development and Planning Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryan, and Armored Corps Commander Staff Colonel 'Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar. [passage omitted]

Ex-President Presents Plans To Resolve Crisis

PM1412144093 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Haydari, Iqbal 'Abdallah, and Ibrahim Humaydi: "'Ali Nasir Tells AL-HAYAH: Solution Should Be Through Dialogue; Crisis Result of Our Inability To Build Modern State"]

[Excerpts] Sanaa, Aden, Damascus—Former Yemeni President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad said in a statement to AL-HAYAH yesterday that he has sent the two parties of the Yemeni leadership proposals to resolve the crisis. He emphasized dialogue, saying that the crisis "is the result of our inability to build a modern unified Yemeni state." [passage omitted]

Former Yemeni President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad said that recent developments between the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] and the General People's Congress represent "a positive development" toward resolving the political crisis in Yemen. He warned that, if the initiatives to secure a solution fail, "unity will not exist" in the future.

'Ali Nasir said that the day before yesterday he held "positive" talks with Jarallah 'Umar, Yemeni culture minister and member of the YSP Political Bureau. He denied that he had met with deputy Humayd 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, who is currently visiting Syria.

He emphasized that he submitted a mediation plan to the two Yemeni leadership parties to resolve the crisis, saying that "the solution is in their hands, because we have made our efforts." He stressed that Yemeni unity must not be abandoned.

'Ali Nasir pointed out that his initiative is awaiting the approval of everyone in Sanaa and Aden and that the crisis actually emerged "as a result of our inability to build a state of institutions and laws." He said that the proposals he had sent to the leadership are based on three points: Any solution must proceed from care for Yemeni unity and must be conducted within its framework; solutions should be agreed via a responsible national dialogue away from the use of force or the threat to use it; and there must be commitment to the democratic option and the reinforcement of democratic practice.

He added that the beginning of an agreement should be: "No to secession, no to infighting, and no to military force."

'Ali Nasir added that "we must acknowledge that we are experiencing a severe crisis and a serious dilemma which have resulted from our inability to build a modern unified Yemeni state—a state of institutions and laws that allows broad popular participation in running the state's affairs." He said that the way out of the present situation requires "a halt to the current escalation, abolition of all military measures, the government's carrying out of its daily tasks, and a turn toward dialogue." [passage omitted]

Hadhramaut Seeks End to Excessive Centralism

PM1312111293 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Lutfi Shatarah and Hamud Munsir report: "Hadhramaut Calls for Prevention of Secession"]

[Excerpt] Aden, Sanaa—The general national meeting representing the people of Hadhramaut Governorate in Yemen convened in al-Mukalla yesterday. Brigadier Khalid Abu-Bakr Baras, head of the preparatory committee, spoke at the meeting. He said that the people of Hadhramaut are raising the slogan of rejecting secession, annexation, and abolition.

The Yemeni Socialist Party Political Bureau yesterday continued its extraordinary meetings amid general pessimism over the continuing political crisis in Yemen. Deputy Prime Minister Brig. Mujahid Abu-Shawarib and Shaykh Sinan Abu-Lahhum, leader of the National Forces Union, went to Aden yesterday to try again with Yemeni Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, who is secluding himself in Aden.

At the Hadhramaut meeting Brig. Baras demanded that tampering with the people's destinies be brought to an end and that Hadhramaut be granted local authority [al-sultah al-mahalliyah] and extensive powers as a necessary step for achieving popular participation in running economic and social affairs, destroying rigid centralism, and working to establish a local rule [hukm mahalli] enjoying extensive powers financially and administratively.

Baras, who delivered his speech to more than 1,000 delegates representing eight directorates in Hadhramaut Governorate, criticized the regime in the north and its mentality, which he said sees southern and eastern governorates as a "booty" annexed to Yemen. He emphasized that the people of Hadhramaut completely reject this "annexation" mentality, which talks of Yemen the root and Yemen the branch. They also reject the division of citizenship into degrees.

He said that the three years of unity have gone against people's hopes and have been accompanied by numerous negative aspects like huge price increases, public negligence, security disruption, and the increase in violent actions and organized assassinations, which now threaten the national entity and have led to the deterioration in the economic situation.

Brig. Baras criticized the continued violation of what has been agreed upon. He said: This meeting is the first of its kind in Hadhramaut and is aimed at creating correct conditions and giving an impetus to national efforts to achieve unanimity, spare the governorate the dangers resulting from the existing situation in Yemen, and contribute—within its capabilities—to protecting the Yemeni homeland.

Political circles believe that the people of Hadhramaut are aiming through this big meeting, in which all political parties and representatives of professional organizations participated, to put pressure on the authorities in Sanaa to end administrative and financial centralism and to prove their ability to consolidate their choice and establish a local system enjoying extensive powers. [passage omitted]

'Aziz Receives French Parliamentary Delegation

JN1412073993 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz this evening received a French parliamentary delegation led by Mrs. (Rosaline Brishidot), chairperson of the French parliamentary group for friendship between Iraq and France within the French National Assembly. Mrs. Brishidot also represents the French Rally for the Republic.

Attending for the French side, in addition to the parliamentary delegation, was Mr. (Silij Budavet), member of the French State Council and former secretary general of the French Foreign Ministry.

Also attending were Riyad al-Qaysi, under secretary of the Foreign Ministry; [name indistinct], deputy head of the Arab and International Relations Committee [words indistinct]; and [name indistinct], head of the section overseeing Iraqi interests [word indistinct].

Saddam Orders Release of French Prisoner

JN1412080693 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0740 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 14 Dec (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has ordered the release of the French prisoner Jean Lock Parrier [name as received]. The Frenchman is serving a jail sentence for entering Iraq illegally.

Serge Budavet [name as received], former secretary general of the French Foreign Ministry and member of the State Council, had appealed, in the name of the French Government, for the release of the French prisoner on humanitarian grounds. Budavet met Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz on 12 December. A French parliamentary delegation, led by Mrs. Rosaline Bashilot [name as received], chairperson of the parliamentary group for friendship between Iraq and France and a deputy for the French Rally for the Republic, had also appealed for the release of the prisoner.

INA learned today that several French figures had recently appealed for the release of the French prisoner. Those include Charles Pasqua, French minister of state for interior; former President Valery Giscard d'Estaing; and former Defense Minister Jean-Pierre Chevenment.

Assembly Speaker Urges Normal Ties

JN1412124393 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Sa'di Mahdi Salih, speaker of the National Assembly, today received Mrs. (Rosaline Bashilot), chairperson of the parliamentary group for friendship between Iraq and France and head of the French National Assembly's Arab-European Relations Committee, and her accompanying delegation.

Salih hoped the French parliament will play a positive role in normalizing relations, particularly since Iraq and France have had distinguished and ideal relations based on mutual respect and common interests. The two friendly peoples, and humanity at large, gained much from these relations.

He added that the unjust embargo against the people of Iraq has increased the suffering of the Iraqis, as a result of the shortages of food and medicine. The embargo is a flagrant violation of human rights, he said. He noted that the insistence of some international parties on maintaining the embargo is meant for political purposes.

For her part, Mrs. (Rosaline Bashilot) said her visit to Iraq reflects the desire of the National Assembly and the French people for normalizing bilateral relations. She asserted that she has feelings of love and amity toward the people of Iraq, who are fully entitled to a decent living and to an equal international status.

She further noted that Iraq has proved its good faith and true desire for peace. She rejected any interpretation that conflicts with the essence of international resolutions, as well as prejudgments and unreasonable explanations.

Foreign Minister Receives German Delegation

JN1312195493 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf this evening received Hans-Jurgen Wischneusky, former German minister of state and minister of cooperation, and Mr. (Parsons), head of the German Foreign Ministry's Middle Eastern Department.

The minister briefed the German delegation on the latest developments concerning relations between Iraq and the Security Council after Iraq has fulfilled all its obligations as stipulated in Resolution 687, particularly Section C of the resolution. He said the UN Security Council should fulfill its obligations toward Iraq and lift the unjust blockade imposed on it, by implementing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687.

They also exchanged views on a number of issues of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministry's under secretary.

German Due To Be Freed 'Tuesday'

NC1412111893 Paris AFP in English 1111 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Amman, Dec 14 (AFP)—Iraq is on Tuesday [14 December] to release a German jailed for seven months for illegal entry, the German embassy here said.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz informed a German delegation of the pending release at a meeting in Baghdad earlier Tuesday, an embassy official said.

Kai Sondermann was jailed for eight years after being arrested on the disputed Iraq-Kuwait border in May.

Dissidents: Saddam Creates 'New Inner Circle'

BR1412114293 Brussels LE SOIR in French 14 Dec 93 p 8

[Interview with Kurd Dlishad Miran and southern Shi'ite S'ad Jawad, both members of the Iraqi National Congress, by Agnes Gorissen; place and date not given: "Saddam Has Practically No More Support in Iraq"]

[Text] [Gorissen] The ambition of the Iraqi National Congress is to federate the various factions opposing the regime, regardless of their ethnic-cultural origins. For what purpose?

[Jawad] We want to construct a democratic, pluralistic society in which all the elements comprising that society will participate in a period of transition ... when we have rid ourselves of the dictator. Our aim is a free society, in which political prisoners will be freed and the parties will truly represent the Iraqi people.

[Gorissen] This presupposes that the various elements comprising the Congress are agreed that Iraq should remain in one piece.

[Miran] It is wrong to say that there will be civil war if there is no strongman in Baghdad. Our organization has been received everywhere—in the United States, in Spain, Saudi Arabia, etc. We constitute a credible alternative, because we support a federal plan which could draw inspiration from the example of Iraqi Kurdistan, where pluralistic elections were held last year, where a parliament is functioning, where political prisoners have been freed, and where one television station and newspapers exist. Every part of Iraq, with its specific population, could construct a model along these lines. Within the framework of a united Iraq, this is the precondition for the development of our country, which is rich in potential.

[Gorissen] This is an interesting plan, but one which Saddam Husayn seems hardly likely to accept.

[Jawad] We intend to act by peaceful means, without provoking a bloodbath. We are trying to establish links within certain circles of the regime. For the regime is only being maintained by a limited number of individuals, including Saddam himself and a few close aides.

[Miran] From our general headquarters in Iraqi Kurdistan we keep in touch with numerous contacts in the Ba'th party and in other circles.

(Miran then went on to recount one success.) Two former ambassadors from the regime, one posted in Canada, the other in Tunisia, have joined the Iraqi National Congress and are now working together with us. Moreover, we are adopting the same approach vis-a-vis the Army, for example. Numerous officials have already taken shelter in Kurdistan. In fact, Saddam cannot really put any more pressure on the Army, not even on the Presidential Guard, or on his Takrit clan. Indeed, things have reached the stage where he has been forced to create a new inner circle comprising between 15,000 and 20,000 special guards who are totally dependent on Saddam.

[Gorissen] And if one day Saddam Husayn is toppled, will this opposition, comprising several peoples, be capable of staying united, rather than foundering in the chaos experienced in Afghanistan?

[Miran] It must. The people have experienced too many wars and massacres. The Kurdish example functions well. There is no reason why the same system should not work at national level. Especially since we are preparing for the future. Our leaders are working on a draft constitution, etc.

[Gorissen] In any case, the two representatives of the Iraqi National Congress insist on international responsibility vis-a-vis the Iraqi people. The embargo, they say, is not weighing too heavily on the regime: Saddam and his people are not going hungry. Jawad and Miran are calling for other forms of pressure, as well as for specific condemnations of certain acts committed by the Iraqi president.

[Jawad] The regime is currently draining the marshes in the south. The use of chemical agents is making this a real disaster, both ecologically—species are disappearing, our water sources are being poisoned, the vegetation is being set on fire—and in human terms: The sole aim of the draining is to drive the people who had previously escaped control by Baghdad to within reach of the regime.

[Gorissen] And the situation in the north is hardly enviable either.

[Miran] Nearly 80 percent of Kurdish land is still devastated as a result of the Gulf War and the Kurdish uprising. In addition, the regime is adding its own blockade to the international embargo, which is depriving us of food, drugs, electricity, fuel, and ... income. Not to mention the constant acts of aggression, armed incursions, bombings, etc.

Al Basrah on Alert Against Mujahidin Actions

LD1012201493 Tehran IRNA in English 1547 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Ahvaz (Khuzestan), Dec. 10, IRNA—Following intensification of popular struggle and likelihood of attacks on Al Basrah by the Iraqi mujahidin forces based in the southern marshlands, the Ba'thist intelligence organization in Al Basrah warned its forces to be on alert an Iraqi opposition source disclosed here last night.

According to the source the organization has cancelled leave for its personnel and adopted tough security measures inside and outside the port city.

However, despite the security measures, he said, the popular forces bombed a cabaret in Al Basrah, killing at least 16 Ba'th party members and intelligence agents.

The source added that following the explosion nervous security forces indiscriminately rounded up a number of youths and charged them with involvement in the blast.

Meanwhile, a high ranking Iraqi air force officer Sattar Abdai Tahir was shot dead in Nasseriyah, last week by popular forces, according to a source close to the opponents of Iraqi regime.

The source said that in a similar attack another security officer working for the Iraqi intelligence was also shot dead.

The Islamic resistance forces of Iraq ambushed an army personnel carrier of the presidential guards and set it ablaze after capturing the soldiers in the vehicle.

The source said that the three soldiers were released a day after the ambush.

'Agent' Actions Affect Electricity in North

JN1112205393 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] The Industry and Minerals Ministry has asserted that the acts of crime being committed by the foreigners' agent cliques in the Autonomous Region have gravely affected services that supply the region's citizens with electricity.

A responsible source at the ministry told a correspondent of the Iraqi News Agency that these cliques had stolen high-tension cable towers, and damaged others. This, it said, led to cutting off power for long periods from the residents of the Autonomous Region.

The source added that four towers belonging to the 132-kilovolt Dibs-Irbil cable were damaged and that a cable 7 km long and another cable 10 km long belonging to the Irbil-Qarah Qush in the Fadzadah complex area that is outside the state's control were also stolen.

The source urged citizens of the Autonomous Region to preserve the people's property in order to secure the supply of electricity.

Opposition Radio Views Sudan Islamic Conference

NC1312203493 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1440 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] We are greatly pained to see that the Arab Islamic conference that concluded its meetings recently in Sudan, a country on which Muslims have high hopes of establishing an Islamic political presence, has astonishingly ignored inviting the Iraqi Islamic movement to attend the conference. The conference also failed to invite any of the prominent Iraqi Islamic ulema. What is even more painful is that the conference invited Saddam's regime, a regime that shows explicit hostility to Islam and that commits horrendous crimes every day against Islamists, as everyone knows.

Here, we would like to remind the conference that this regime is the one that assassinated 'Allamah martyr al-Sayyid Mahdi al-Hakim in Sudan while attending a previous Arab-Islamic conference. Before that, the regime assassinated a number of senior Islamic ulema in Iraq, such as great Islamic thinker Grand Ayatollah martyr Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, martyr Hasan al-Shirazi, martyr Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Badri, 90-year old martyr Qasim (?Shibbar), and many other prominent Iraqi ulema. The regime destroyed all religious institutions, theological centers, and sacred sites in Iraq. It sentenced to death all members of the Islamic movement and so far has killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqis in a brutal manner.

The conference Secretary General Hasan al-Turabi is well aware of all the facts that fully incriminate this regime. Did he invite the Iraqi regime to reward it for his horrible crimes against Muslims in Iraq and against an Iraqi Islamic guest of Sudan, who was open to the Islamic world and did not recognize the limits of geography and language?

With due respect to the honest Islamic movements and figures who attended the conference, and while appreciating the nature of the subjects discussed by the conference, we are astonished that the plight of the Iraqi Muslims caused by Saddam's crimes and his terrorist regime was ignored. The crimes committed by the governments against the Islamic peoples were also ignored. If someone tries to find an excuse by claiming to be unaware of what is going on in Iraq, it is unacceptable because the Iraqis are his brothers bound together by the same language and religion. The conferees are well aware of the injustice and oppression committed against the Iraqi people, and we did not expect these brothers in language and religion to forget us.

In conclusion, the conference, whether intentionally or unintentionally, did Saddam Husayn and his regime a free service by inviting it to attend. By so doing, the conferees sought to serve narrow political interests with disregard for higher Islamic interests.

Popular Forces Chief Urges Aid for Intifadah

JN0912160293 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1120 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Dec (INA)—The General Secretariat of the Arab Popular Forces Conference [APFC] has hailed the heroic Palestinian intifadah on its sixth anniversary.

In a statement to INA, APFC Secretary General Sa'd Qasim Hammudi said the continuation and escalation of the blessed Palestinian intifadah, as well as the start of its seventh year, confirm the Palestinian Arabs' determination to pursue the valiant struggle against the repressive Zionist occupation authorities, despite the crimes being committed against them by Zionist rulers and settlers in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The APFC secretary general commended the sacrifices, steadfastness, and endurance of the Palestinian people, who are suffering from blockade, savage killings, deportations, and a cancerous settlement drive, affirming that the blood of the righteous martyrs will remain a beacon to guide the mujahidin who seek to liberate Palestine and safeguard its Arabism, regardless of the sacrifices and protracted struggle entailed and despite the imperialist-Zionist conspiracy, which seeks to force capitulation on the Arabs, liquidate Arab rights, and eliminate the the Palestinian people's resistance.

Sa'd Qasim Hammudi urged the nation's vanguards and its militant masses to extend all possible financial, political, and media assistance to the Palestinian people to promote the glorious intifadah and keep it going.

President's Son 'Udayy Attends Cabinet Session

JN1312110993 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Mr. 'Udayy Saddam Husayn attended a regular weekly cabinet session under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir. Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz attended the session.

The cabinet discussed proposals presented by 'Udayy Saddam Husayn to develop the youth sector and the fields of education and higher education. The cabinet adopted the (?appropriate) decisions.

Airspace 'Violations' 1-9 Dec Reported

'Violations' 4-6 Dec

JN1012125293 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1030 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 10 Dec (INA)—Iraq has lodged a protest with the Arab League over the continued provision of facilities by the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers to the U.S., British, and French aircraft of aggression to violate Iraqi airspace.

In a letter addressed to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the Iraqi permanent representative to the Arab League said that these aircraft violated Iraqi airspace, flying from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, during period 4-6 December. They conducted 171 hostile air sorties during that period, he added.

The Iraqi permanent representative to the Arab League requested the Arab League to circulate this letter among Arab League members so they may learn of the serious threat these airspace violations pose to Iraq's sovereignty and national unity.

'Violations' 8, 9 Dec

JN1312140793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (INA)—Iraq has informed the Arab League that the rulers of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait continue to provide facilities to the U.S., British, and French aircraft in order to violate Iraq's airspace and seriously threaten its security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter addressed yesterday to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League said that the aforementioned aircraft violated Iraq's airspace on 8 and 9 December after taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The aircraft conducted 172 hostile sorties.

Iraq's representative enclosed with his letter a list detailing these violations.

'Violations' Protested to UN

JN1312141393 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Iraq yesterday protested to the United Nations the violation of Iraq's airspace by U.S. aircraft, which conducted reconnaissance and provocation missions and dropped flares.

In a memorandum he sent to the UN secretary general, Iraq's permanent UN envoy said these aircraft between 1 and 9 December conducted 666 hostile sorties, as well as three reconnaissance missions, over various parts of Iraqi territory. A hostile formation dropped flares over Ninawa Governorate.

The Iraqi envoy asked that the memorandum be distributed to the member states as a UN Security Council document.

Completion of Bridge in Baghdad Announced

JN1312150993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1130 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 13 Dec (INA)—It was announced today that the Leader Saddam Double-Deck Bridge in Baghdad has been completed.

This was announced in a cable to President Saddam Husayn from Staff Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan, the minister of industry and minerals and supervisor of the Military Industrialization Organization, announcing the good news on the completion of the bridge. [passage omitted]

The cable stresses that this giant, matchless breakthrough was the product of the revolution of perseverance. It marks a pure national achievement, both in terms of design and execution, and was completed in a record time of less than 15 months. It was completed with purely Iraqi experience and locally available material, without reliance on any imported materials or foreign currency. This achievement surpasses the traditional standards of major specialized firms, which if asked to execute such a giant strategic project, would have taken at least three years under normal circumstances and at a cost at least four times higher than the cost with which this great edifice was completed.

Rabin Rejects Return to Pre-1967 Borders

TA1412113293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin today said categorically that Israel will not return to pre-1967 borders. Addressing the participants of the International Conference of Jewish Parliamentarians, Rabin also complained of the trade balance with Europe and strongly urged efforts to improve markets with Israel. More from No'omi Segal:

[Begin recording] [Segal] Rabin said emphatically he will not compromise on Israel's security; by no means would Israel go back to pre-1967 borders. He also said he would like to see Israel's defense line along the Jordanian border and outlined his view of the interim period to Palestinian autonomy. No settlements would be uprooted during that time, Rabin said. Israel will be responsible for the security of the settlements and the roads, and it will also control crossing points.

[Rabin] Israel will carry responsibility for external security, which means that the lines that divide the territories from Egypt and Jordan will be under our control, under IDF [Israel Defense Forces] control.

[Segal] On economic matters, Rabin complained about the uneven trade balance between Israel and Europe, calling for an end to what he termed discrimination against Israel. Each year Israel imports twice as much as it exports from Europe, Rabin said. Even after his recent trip to Europe to nurture trade ties, progress has been slow coming. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Peres: No Room To Reopen PLO Agreement

TA1412114793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres met today with Jewish parliamentarians from around the world who are attending an international conference in Israel. Peres discussed the negotiations with the PLO and commented on the results of the elections in Russia and their ramifications for the Jews there. As for the political process, Peres said that there is no room to reopen the agreement with the PLO. In his opinion, it will be possible to reach agreement within a very short time. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports:

[Begin recording] [Hecht] It would be a mistake to reopen the Declaration of Principles [DOP], the foreign minister asserted. Both Israel and 'Arafat are committed to the agreement and must honor it. Foreign Minister Peres claimed that the outstanding differences regarding the Gaza Strip and Jericho can be resolved within a short time.

[Peres] I cannot commit myself to 10 days; however, I believe that the problem can be resolved. I do not know how long this will take. Incidentally, the withdrawal is scheduled to begin four months after we reach agreement. This is delaying peace unnecessarily, and the absence of peace leads to victims and exacts a very heavy toll. I believe that we all want to shorten the period between the present situation and a state of peace.

[Hecht] Peres was asked whether his trip to Europe tomorrow is linked to the discussions with the PLO on the issues of the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

[Peres] Each trip I make is part of my job as foreign minister. The Foreign Ministry works abroad.

[Hecht] The hottest topic of discussion at the international convention of Jewish parliamentarians, in which Peres participated this morning, were the results of the Russian elections. The Russians, Peres said, rightly voted in favor of the constitution but badly erred in their voting on the composition of parliament.

[Peres, in English] It is not only anti-Semitism, I think. The Russians have voted rightly on the constitution and wrongly on the parliament. That is their decision, but I can say to all Jewish people that there are places here.

[Hecht] Anti-Semitism is not a Jewish problem, Peres said, but the Jews can now decide for themselves where they want to live. They must not wait any longer. Peres asked: Why should they ponder the future actions of the various parties in Russia? The Jews should immediately decide to immigrate to Israel. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 14 December adds that Peres "noted that the results of the Russian elections are not surprising and asserted that anti-Semitism has always existed there."]

Accord 'Void' if Palestinian State Declared

TA1412143493

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 14 December quotes Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yo'el Zinger as saying that "if the PLO announces the establishment of a Palestinian state, it will constitute a significant violation of the Declaration of Principles, and Israel will be permitted to view it as null and void. The response to such a move is made by the political echelon, Zinger told the Knesset Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee, which considered the legal aspects of the agreement with the PLO.

"Zinger, who participated in the Oslo talks, said that within the framework of the preliminary negotiations, the Palestinians did not want to make due with a discussion of their political rights—that is, the elections for the Palestinian autonomy council—but to discuss their national rights. The Israeli representatives, however rejected the request. He added that the PLO has recently radicalized its positions as part of the negotiating process, but both sides will have to give up some of their demands in order to reach a compromise. He said the extra 10 days decided on is aimed at working out the border crossing issue, but that does not mean it will be resolved within that time frame."

Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1330 GMT on 14 December reports that Zinger also said: "There is no intention of signing the agreement with the Palestinians within 10 days." Zinger told the IDF Radio's Knesset correspondent Tziyon Nanus that "the aim is to overcome the problem of the border crossings and the size of the Jericho area within that period, while there is no possibility of resolving all the problems created by the accord within 10 days."

Zinger told the Knesset committee that "Israel and the PLO agreed that anything worked out on the border crossings will also apply to airports and sea ports. Committee members criticized the many loopholes in the Oslo agreement. Zinger responded by saying that what was agreed upon in Oslo was the framework in principle while the details of the accord are now being worked out."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew, later in the 1400 GMT newscast, reports that Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq, head of the Israeli delegation to the talks with the PLO, said "the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians is over the talks not being conducted in conformity with the Oslo agreement." In an interview with Qol Yisra'el in Arabic, Major General Shahaq said that "changes cannot be made in the agreement, and we will stay loyal to what we put our signatures to. We will withdraw from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, but we will leave responsibility for external security, the defense of the settlements, and the security of Israeli civilians in our hands." Shahaq said "the timeframe is of prime importance and we must speed up the process in order to increase support for it."

Beilin Sees Withdrawal in 'Two Weeks or So'

OW1412114193 Tokyo KYODO in English 1050 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Tokyo, Dec. 14 KYODO—Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) will likely conclude their extended negotiations on Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho in "two weeks or so," Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin predicted Tuesday [14 December].

"I believe that since the interest of both sides to strike a deal is such a strong one, we will be able to have an agreement in the coming two weeks or so," Beilin said in a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan.

"Then we will not have to postpone the date of April 13, which is in my eyes is a more important one," the senior Israeli negotiator said, referring to a deadline for implementation of Palestinian self-administration in Gaza and Jericho.

Beilin was speaking after Israel failed Monday to meet a December 13 target date for withdrawal of its forces from the two areas, which had been set out in last September's historic Israeli-PLO peace accord.

After insisting that Israel firmly adhere to the withdrawal timetable, PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat reluctantly agreed Monday to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's call for a delay of at least 10 days while both sides try to resolve differences over security and the scope of Palestinian self-rule.

Rabin's recent remark that no date in the timetable was "sacred" has fanned Palestinian suspicions that Israel will not fully carry out its part of the September agreement.

Beilin suggested the troop withdrawal date is insignificant compared with the deadline for implementation of limited Palestinian self-rule.

Recalling that Israel originally agreed to negotiate for two months on withdrawal and implement autonomy four months later, he said, "What is important is that the time limit is half a year."

"We are going, I presume, to conclude the negotiations and implementation by April 13," he said.

In explaining the withdrawal delay, Beilin stressed the difficulty involved in undertaking to conclude such complex and delicate negotiations in such a short period of time.

"It doesn't mean that in order to stick to the timetable that the Palestinians have to submit to our views or that we have to submit to their views because it is only a target date and in order to achieve an agreement you have to agree with the other side," he said.

Beilin said the issues involved in the question of self-rule for the Palestinians "are endless and could be negotiated for years and years without end."

But he acknowledged that prolonging the current negotiations with the moderate Palestinian elements could lead to a strengthening of hard-line and extremist elements among Palestinians and Israelis alike who oppose the September peace accord.

He said the challenge for Israel is to strengthen the "more pragmatic force in the Palestinian camp."

Rabin, 'Arafat Said To Share Common Destiny

TA1412122493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Dec 93 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "Brothers in Adversity"]

[Text] The "sacred date" is behind us and, as expected, Rabin and 'Arafat did not sign an agreement. The disappointment in the territories was as big as the expectations created by 'Arafat. The reports about the death of the negotiations with the Palestinians, however, were greatly exaggerated. The historic day was put off, not canceled.

The reason is that the two incumbent leaders have a vested political and personal interest—or, to be more precise, a personal and political interest—to bring the Gaza-Jericho First negotiations to a successful culmination. From the moment they plunged into the chilly waters of mutual recognition, the two men began to share a common destiny. It was only a year ago that the very mention of 'Arafat's name in front of Rabin would make his skin crawl, whereas to 'Arafat, Rabin, more than any other man, symbolized the jingoistic, bone-breaking attitude in the territories. The moment they started talking, setting target dates, and getting into the nitty-gritty of separate coexistence, however, they perforce became traveling companions .

Political correspondents are fond of labeling political processes according to the "chemistry" that was or was not created between leaders. In our case, I could not conceive of any two men more different in character, looks, and way of thinking and expressing themselves than 'Arafat and Rabin. No personal chemistry emerged—and, one can safely bet, will not emerge—between the two men, even though Rabin was favorably impressed with 'Arafat in their first tete-a-tete in Cairo and said that, contrary to what he had thought, 'Arafat is the only Palestinian with whom business can be done. The compliment notwithstanding, they are not expected to be seen breaking bread together at Rabin's favorite restaurant any time soon.

Nevertheless, quite a few similarities can be found in their predicament: Both do not enjoy massive support for what they decided to do; both have limited credit, which they know they should not squander; both face an extreme and fanatic opposition from within, which fears that the path they chose might prove successful and is doing its best to thwart it; both are subject to tough internal criticism: one for giving in too much and the other for agreeing to accept too little. Consequently, both men (each in his own way) are sending each other distress signals: "I cannot accept less than...." or "I cannot give more than...." Yet they both realize that in this game, time is of the essence for their future. The longer they take to reach an agreement, the more strength their opponents will gather.

There are even similarities in the modus operandi of the two politicians: Both like to play their cards close to the chest and act alone; both have strong egos, as evidenced in the wish to prove that they made the decisions and called the shots. Of particular interest is the similarity between the way 'Arafat got rid of men he feared would endanger him or detract from his glory and the way in which Rabin has recently neutralized Peres' men. Neither 'Arafat nor Rabin want to share the Nobel Prize.

Both want to prove to their people before the agreement is signed that they fought valiantly to attain for them what they cherish most. "Mr. Security" Rabin wants to prove that giving up Gaza and Jericho not only did not detract one iota from security but even helped defuse a major focus of terror. 'Arafat, on the other hand, wants to prove to his people that he delivered them a state. This point marked the start of the inevitable difficulties in the negotiations. After all, a Palestinian state is not mentioned in the Oslo agreement, while security arrangements were a prerequisite to it. Rabin did not attach too much importance to the symbols 'Arafat tried to sneak in during the negotiations. As long as he confined himself to symbols, Rabin could always dismiss them as "utter nonsense." However, the moment it transpired that 'Arafat was seeking not only symbols but real elements of sovereignty—control of the border crossings and roads, control of the areas between the settlements, building an airport and a passenger terminal in Rafah, turning Jericho into a district as big as the Gaza Strip—the negotiations ran into an impasse.

Rabin embraced Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq's approach whereby, owing to the fact that the agreement is to be implemented in an area "where two societies and entities are not separated but rather closely intermingled," it must be clear, specific, and detailed down to the last comma. It must clearly spell out who is permitted to do what and when, who controls what, and who is permitted to do what in the event of a terror attack. Clarity must reign in all areas, seeing that the first Jewish fatality after the implementation of the autonomy could doom the entire process to failure.

On the face of it, the negotiations are in a big crisis, albeit an inevitable one. An agreement attained too easily would have aroused suspicions that the two sides gave in too much too soon. In practice, what we are witnessing is a psychological tug-of-war between two brothers in adversity who must prove to their respective people that they did not give in and who must find a way to settle the crisis within nine days—or perhaps even 11 days, as Rabin put it—or maybe longer. After all, it is clear to both of them that if they fail to find success together and the land is consequently covered in blood and fire, they may be doomed to fall together.

Rabin on IDF Mobilization, Increased Security

TA1312190293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rabin says there is a huge mobilization in the Israel Defense Forces to counter any plans of terrorist attacks within Israel proper. The premier told Labor Knesset members [MK's] both the temporary failure of the Declaration of Principles and the anniversary of the founding of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] organization could be pretexts to carry out such attacks. Meanwhile, security around the prime minister was also tighter than usual today. David Ze'ev reports:

The prime minister used the term huge to describe the Army's mobilization. Expressing his concern over suicide attacks, Rabin said the closure of the territories into Israel over the Green Line imposed during the earlier part of the year had been tightened: Surprise roadblocks, the ingathering of intelligence information, in general uncovering plots to carry out attacks. The premier said both the passing of the 13 December date for beginning implementation of the Gaza-Jericho First accord, the Hamas anniversary, and the permission to return Rabin confirmed being granted this week to the remaining Hamas and Islamic Jihad deportees who were expelled a year ago to Lebanon, were reasons for this huge mobilization.

The prime minister himself was under tighter security as he appeared in the Knesset. Contrary to the usual practice, reporters were kept away from the front of the Labor caucus room where the premier addressed Labor party MK's. A Rabin bodyguard asserted those were the instructions. Members of the electronic media were supervised closely as they moved their equipment near the prime minister on their way to the back of the room and on their way out. When Rabin left the room he was whisked away to a back elevator. The Prime Minister's Office seemed agitated when asked about the measures. There was no denial, only the following statement: We have nothing to tell you.

Knesset security was also beefed up. Cars were checked as they turned from the main road to the Knesset promenade, instead of at the security booth, once they have already entered the area. The Knesset chief security officer confirmed that on specific days, such precautions are taken, but he refused to elaborate and walked away when asked why this time.

Chief of Staff Views Situation in Territories

TA1012125493 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 10 Dec 93 pp 1, 2, 3

[Interview with Lieutenant General Ehud Baraq, chief of staff, by Tzvi Gilat on 9 December; place not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Gilat] The prime minister said this week that he has ordered the reinforcement of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the territories. Was that a political decision?

[Baraq] The decision was operational. It was made in consultations I held with the prime minister, but events made the move almost inevitable even prior to that meeting.

[Gilat] But it was implemented this week.

[Baraq] We beefed up the forces several months ago and again after the Mizrahi murder, and this week we doubled them. We are talking about war, and any force required to deal with that is justified. But it would not take much to reach the point where people who have not been properly trained to fight that war are being sent to the territories. There is a very fine line that we must not cross.

[Gilat] Are we close to reaching it?

[Baraq] When we reach new peaks of violence, as we did this week, we come very close to it. I cannot, however, rule out the possibility of our having to send additional reinforcements next week. At the same time, we do not have unlimited forces in the regular Army or the reserves. I doubt whether Israeli society could agree to reservists being sent to Judaea and Samaria for 90-day periods. Can anyone imagine such a thing? We are built for a flexible response, beefing up forces when necessary and reducing them when the situation once again permits it.

[Gilat] But it looks like the higher level of deployment will continue for a long time.

[Baraq] The Shin Bet and the Army undercover units are responsible for our primary and most effective effort, which has led to the capture of 300 wanted men and the killing of 35. Hundreds, not thousands, are involved in that effort. In addition, we are busy defending the traffic axes and the settlements. A settler traveling along the road gets a sense of security when he sees soldiers and vehicles, but the primary activity is away from the main traffic axes and is handled by fewer people.

[Gilat] Why are the security arrangements for the main roads in Gaza so important to us?

[Baraq] If you look at the situation on the roads in Judaea and Samaria at present, prior to the [implementation of the] agreement, it is obvious that there is no chance of waging the fight against the wanted men along the main traffic axes. Dozens of vehicles and hundreds of kilometers of roads are involved. Our main effort is to turn the wanted men into hunted animals. We will no longer be able to do that after the Gaza and Jericho agreement. We will not be able to deploy the Shin Bet and the undercover units as we are doing now. That is why it is important that in the short time that remains, the type of presence we will have and our ability to pursue the wanted men be defined properly, so that those conducting patrols, the settlers in the field, and the Palestinian police are absolutely clear about what is permissible and what is not.

[Gilat] The implementation of the agreement begins in another four days. Is what is permissible and what is not clear already?

[Baraq] In recent weeks, the negotiations dealt with a wide range of details, but there are still many differences over issues of substance: the contiguity of the settlements, control of the border crossings, the size of the Jericho area, and security on the roads.

The Palestinians' failure to understand that there is a need to start looking at the situation in realistic terms, that the Israeli demands are not a diplomatic conspiracy but part of the substance of the agreement, and that they have to look on the bright side—assuming responsibility for their own lives and handling almost all aspects of life—makes it much harder to go on. Once they understand these things, there will be a chance of making progress in the negotiations, but I do not believe it will happen by 13 December.

[Gilat] You once said that in negotiations, one must be prepared to die for what is essential, fight for what is important, and compromise on the rest, especially if it is important to the other side. What should Israel die for?

[Baraq] We will not be able to give up anything related to security. Even if we get everything we need in the agreement, that will not give us total security. It is an initial experiment, not even an interim agreement. But it is clear that if there is an agreement, we will not continue to move around in al-Shati' and Jabalyah as we have been. That reality will make it harder for us.

If the Palestinian police does not deal with the terrorist elements effectively, they will operate freely everywhere, right up to the roads. Therefore, it is good that this experiment is taking place in Gaza, where the Jewish settlements are concentrated together. Because it is a difficult situation, it is important that matters be absolutely clear to both sides.

[Gilat] From your remarks, it appears that we are not only handing over our security to the Palestinian police, but that we are also depending on the Palestinian Shin Bet.

[Baraq] That is correct. The word "depending" is misleading. They are not doing us a service. If the PLO does not prove itself to be in control of the area, it will not be able to demand that the agreement be extending to all of Judaea and Samaria.

[Gilat] Is there already a framework for coordination with the Palestinian Shin Bet?

[Baraq] If we are called on to assist, to the limited extent we can, I suppose we will do so.

[Gilat] Was the meeting between the commander of the Southern Command and Fatah's young guard in the Gaza Strip part of that?

[Baraq] That was a very important meeting. We will extend it to meetings on the battalion and brigade levels. It also helps to get rid of the demonic image some of the Palestinians have of us and helps our people understand that we are entering a new reality.

[Gilat] Can we expect the Gaza brigade commander to meet with the Fatah commander in al-Shati'?

[Baraq] Definitely, even if the signing of the agreement is postponed. The battalion commander will meet with a Fatah Hawks leader and discuss with him what will happen there and what must be done in the meantime.

[Gilat] With whom is the dialogue being conducted? With the young people or 'Arafat's generals?

[Baraq] It is being held at all levels: with 'Arafat's people in Taba and al-'Arish and with the people in the field. I believe that we will also talk with the middle-level people—those who were deported or left the area and who have contacts or working relations with the other levels.

[Gilat] Even if the signing of the agreement is put off, 13 December has already become a target date. What will happen on that day?

[Baraq] I hope that in the time still left, several issues—especially those that will convince us that the Palestinians are realistic—will be finalized.

It is possible that what will be reached by 13 December will enable us to pass that date not in "deadlock" but with a shared evaluation that the gaps can be closed. If that happens, we may consider gestures in return for progress on their part. In general, we no longer believe in gestures. We have seen that the Palestinians have an insatiable appetite for gestures and an unlimited ability not to respond to the latest gesture.

[Gilat] Where do think the main problem lies?

[Baraq] It is obvious that the Palestinians want a Palestinian state at the end of the run in the permanent settlement. I believe we will see many signs of Palestinian creativity on issues that have not be sealed in a formal agreement.

[Gilat] Does the ongoing friction with the settlers call for the IDF to understand that it has a different type of task?

[Baraq] Such friction also existed in the past. I remind you of the incident at Joseph's Tomb in Nabulus several years ago. The struggle was not over the number of people permitted at the site, but over the state's authority over its citizens. All necessary force will be used against those who do not accept the authority of the state. Once again, I stress that I avoid using generalities.

[Gilat] An Israeli officer said recently: I do not know what to do when confronting a six-year-old boy who overturns a vegetable stand in Hebron. What would you tell him?

[Baraq] He should do what he had to do 10 years ago. Grab him by the hand, tell him firmly that it is forbidden, and inform his parents. I also expect the officer to take speedy action after the event to make sure children do not overturn stalls. I also expect the settler leadership to prevent such damaging, ridiculous, and embarrassing incidents from taking place.

[Gilat] The settlers plan to spend the night in Jericho en masse when the declaration of principles is implemented.

[Baraq] Wherever there is an illegal demonstration, it will be dispersed. I repeat: The struggle should not take place there.

[Gilat] Will the settlers be given freedom of movement after the agreement is signed?

[Baraq] After the agreement is signed, they will be able to travel along the road that crosses the city of Jericho. Whoever will not want to do that will be able to travel along the road that bypasses the town. That will also be the case in the Qatif Bloc and in Netzarim. But we expect Israelis not to run around Gaza neighborhoods in order to test the principle of freedom of movement.

I expect even commercial ties between Israelis and Palestinians to take place outside the Gaza Strip or in areas under our control.

[Gilat] The Palestinian police force will need arms; the settlers also have arms. Is there not concern about a militia war?

[Baraq] We have the option of not making an agreement, but we cannot make an agreement and expect the Palestinians to fight terrorism with a club and a megaphone. It is obvious that they require personal weapons and vehicles. Therefore, I stress that it will be an experiment for Judaea and Samaria. It is clear to us, however, that even if the experiment fails, it will be very hard to change course.

[Gilat] The question is even if the experiment succeeds, is it applicable? The reality in Judaea and Samaria is much more complex than in Gaza, there are a lot of isolated settlements and the friction is constant.

[Baraq] There are also isolated settlements in Gaza. I believe that within several months we will be looking at the outcome and considering our future moves.

[Gilat] Is there not concern that the start of the implementation of the accord will lead to euphoria, the thought that there is less need for the IDF?

[Baraq] I think that we have passed the euphoric stage. I believe that 1994 will be a year in which the deliberations with our other neighbors will be deepened and become more substantive, and the main direction might be decided. But as long as a substantial breakthrough is not made I do not foresee euphoria.

[Gilat] Are you referring to the agreement with Syria?

[Baraq] If we manage to pull Syria out of the cycle of violence, that will be meaningful on condition that it does not harm our security interests. If peace arrangements are reached, there will be room to consider how the defense budget will look and place stress on investments. I believe that the defense budget will be the same as today's in real terms for years to come. But in the future, we might be able to divert some of the investments to speeding up development and procurement efforts, which will prepare the IDF for the battlefield of the future.

[Gilat] Several days ago, Israel received MIA Zekharya Baumel's Army identification card. On the one hand, we were happy that something has happened, on the other, many were angry because it looked like capitalizing on human tragedy.

[Baraq] The return of the I.D. is important. The handling of the MIA and POW issue is very important, and public discussion does not help advance the matter. We expect all of those involved to do whatever they can, as a goodwill gesture for future agreements.

[Gilat] In another four months you complete your term as chief of staff. Will you want to go for another year?

[Baraq] It is still too early to discuss that in view of the many expected events. I believe we will meet again before then and I will let you ask me that question again.

'Terrorist' Killed, Police Injured in Shoot-Out

'Accomplice' Flees Scene

TA1412071293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] A border policeman was slightly injured in an exchange of gunfire with terrorists south of Gaza City this morning. One of the terrorists was killed, and his accomplice fled.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that a Border Police force spotted two terrorists in a car and began to chase them. The terrorists fired at the policemen, and one of the terrorists was killed in the ensuing shoot-out. The second terrorist fled in another car. The security forces are now examining whether the car in which the terrorists were driving was rigged with explosives.

Border Police Commander Yitzhaq Aharonovich has arrived at the scene, near the al-Qubbah area south of Gaza city, and roadblocks have been set up in an attempt to capture the fugitive.

Security Forces Detonate Car Bomb

TA1412085593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] The security forces have detonated a booby-trapped car left behind by the two terrorists spotted this morning by border policemen south of Gaza city. This was reported by our correspondent Nisim Qeynan. Earlier it was reported that a border policeman was slightly injured in a shoot-out with terrorists who attempted to escape by car. One of the terrorists was killed, but his accomplice managed to escape in another vehicle. The car they were driving in was examined and found to contain rigged explosive charges.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0830 GMT on 14 December adds that "during the searches conducted by the security forces, a second car bomb was discovered, and it is currently being dismantled by bomb disposal experts."]

Fugitive 'Terrorist' Captured

TA1412125993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] The terrorist who escaped this morning after a clash with the Border Police in the Gaza Strip has been captured. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that one terrorist, a resident of Gaza's Tuffah neighborhood and member of Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam organization, was killed in the clash. A border policeman was slightly hurt in the leg. Explosives were found in the vehicle in which the two were traveling and were detonated without causing damage.

IDF Prevents Settlers From Setting Up Trailers

TA1212173093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers are currently preventing settlers in the Qatif Bloc from putting up trailers near the settlement of Neve Deqalim in an attempt to build a college on the site. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that the settlers transported the trailers to the site aboard big trucks, but an IDF unit arrived on the scene before they managed to unload them and ordered the settlers to leave. The settlers claim that the site is public land and belongs to the regional council and that they have a permit to conduct their settlement operation.

Right-wing demonstrations against the government were held this evening at several road junctions in northern Israel. There were no reports of disturbances.

Jewish Agency Plans To Move Territories' Settlers

TA1212123793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] The United Jewish Agency has prepared a settlement program, designed to be an alternative to settlements eventually evacuated in the administered territories and the Golan Heights. The plan is said to include establishing 26 new communal settlements in the Galilee and expanding existing ones there. In this way the Jewish Agency hopes that within a decade, 150,000 additional Jews will be living in the Galilee, and this would also help the demographic balance in the area, which today tends toward an Arab majority.

[Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 12 December adds: "Many residents of Judaea and Samaria have began expressing interest in the Jewish Agency plan to set up 26 communal settlements in the Galilee, which are to substitute settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Golan. A senior Jewish Agency source told our correspondent Nati Zilberman that the settlers in question are mainly moderates who have expressed a willingness to be evacuated."]

Settlement Plan for Territories Denied

TA1212161693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] The spokesman of the Jewish Agency has denied a report that the new settlements planned in the Galilee are meant to be an alternative to settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Golan Heights, if these are evacuated. Nevertheless, our correspondent Nati Zilberman reports, the spokesman added that the plan was only in its initial stages and that Jewish Agency officials believe settlers from Judaea and Samaria could be integrated into it.

Meanwhile, our correspondent has learned that the Jewish Agency has obtained the Construction Ministry's permission to build the infrastructure for 5 of the 26 settlements planned. When the plan is submitted to the cabinet for its approval in approximately two weeks, Jewish Agency officials will contend that one of the reasons for the plan is the geopolitical changes expected in the region.

Human Rights Violations in Territories Reported

TA1012180393 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 10 Dec 93 p A6

[Report by Yosi Torpstein]

[Text] During the sixth year of the intifadah, from December 1992 to December 1993, the Israeli security forces grossly continued to violate human rights in the territories. This pronouncement is contained in a report entitled "Human Rights in the Territories in the Sixth Year of the Intifadah" published yesterday by Betzelem, the Israeli information center for human rights in the territories.

Betzelem notes that "a mass deportation" of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad activities took place in December 1992, which led to a considerable increase in the number of Palestinian and Israeli fatalities. In the six months following the deportation, the number of Palestinian fatalities in the territories was twice as high as in the six months preceding the deportation. The report does not include similar data about Israeli fatalities during the same period.

Some 165 Palestinians were killed during the sixth year of the intifadah, compared with 121 in the fifth year—a rise of approximately 36 percent. According to Betzelem's data, this was the first year in which the number of fatalities in the Gaza Strip was almost 60 percent higher than in the West Bank. In previous years, the ratio was the other way around.

In the first half of the sixth year, there was a sharp increase in the number of children under the age of 16 killed in the territories. The report contends that the security forces continued to use unlawful investigation methods as well as to direct massive firepower at houses while searching for wanted men. Twenty-seven wanted men were arrested in 10 of 21 operations which involved the demolition of houses.

The report notes that there was an increase in the second half of the sixth year in the number of incidents in which lethal fire was opened at cars which failed to stop at roadblocks under circumstances that were not life-threatening. As a result, 16 people (two Israelis, 13 Palestinians, and a Saudi tourist of Palestinian origin) were killed in 1993.

The number of Palestinian fatalities, including children, in the territories decreased in the second half of the sixth year, with the exception of November, in which 12 Palestinians were killed, as compared to five in October.

The sixth year of the intifadah is the first since 1987 in which houses were not demolished as punishment for security crimes and in which the number of houses sealed in the territories went down.

Some 27 civilians and 18 security personnel were killed in the territories by Palestinian gunfire in the sixth year, compared with 11 civilians and 11 security personnel in the fifth year. The number of security personnel killed by Palestinians within the boundaries of the Green Line increased: Eight were killed during this period, whereas none were killed the year before. The only decrease was registered in the number of Israeli civilians killed by Palestinians within the boundaries of the Green Line, which in the went down from eight in the fifth year to six in the sixth year of the intifadah.

Continued Waning Support for Agreement Seen

TA1312144293 Tel Aviv YEDIOT AHARONOT in Hebrew 13 Dec 93 p 4

[Public opinion poll by the Dahaf Institute directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah]

[Text] Question: Does your impression of the peace process to date suit your expectations when the agreement was signed, or is it more positive or negative than you expected? (Findings quoted in percentage points)

	Suits Expectations	More positive	More negative
Jews	24	9	67
Arabs	25	19	56

Question: Are you in favor of the "Gaza-Jericho First" autonomy agreement?

	In favor	Against	Did not reply
Jews	48	46	6
Arabs	81	13	6

In the poll conducted on 7 September, one week before the agreement was signed, 57 percent of the Jews and 87 percent of the Arabs said they were in favor of the agreement, while 41 percent of the Jews and 13 percent of the Arabs said they were against it.

The current poll was conducted last weekend among 595 respondents, both Jews and Arabs, who constitute a representative sample of the adult population of Israel. The maximum margin of error is 4 percent.

Support for National Unity Government Reported

TA1412094393 Tel Aviv YEDIOT AHARONOT in Hebrew 14 Dec 93 p 9

[Public opinion poll by the Dahaf Institute directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah]

[Text] Question: Do you support or oppose President Hayim Weizman's proposal to set up a national unity government? (The findings are quoted in percentage points)

	Support	Oppose	Did not reply
Total sample	60	36	4
Labor supporters	52	44	4
Likud supporters	66	32	2
Meretz supporters	35	61	4
Tzomet supporters	71	14	15
National Religious Party supporters	76	24	–
Youth who were not old enough to vote in the latest elections	77	18	5

The poll was conducted on 9 and 12 December among 523 respondents who constitute a representative sample of Israel's adult Jewish population. The maximum margin of error is 4 percent.

Jericho Strike To Protest Delayed Implementation

TA1312115293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpt] A partial three-hour strike was observed in Jericho this morning to protest the delay in implementing the autonomy agreement. The PLO office in the town is also closed for the day. Reporter Mark Weiss was in Jericho this morning:

[Begin Weiss recording] There were almost as many foreign media crews in Jericho this morning as local residents. The big day had finally come, December the 13th, but nothing was happening. Most shops closed for three hours to protest the delay in implementing the agreement, and outside the PLO office, the sign read: This office is closed because Israel does not want peace. 'Abd-al-Karim, the head of the Jericho PLO office, said the office was a symbol that something had changed, and because nothing has really changed, they decided to close the office for the day. [passage omitted] [end recording]

New Weekly Begins Publication 10 Dec

TA1112105993 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1830 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Two weeks after the closing of HADASHOT, and in a week that witnessed an end to publication of HA'OLAM HAZE, a new paper appeared on the stands today. SHISHI, a weekly published by the Monitin group, is said by its publisher and editor to be HADASHOT's successor, especially of the latter's weekend supplement. Prior to its publication, SHISHI launched an agressive advertising campaign along the lines of its two larger competitors. The new paper failed to arouse much curiosity when it appeared on Tel Aviv streets. The paper's editors promise to publish a weekly specializing in commentaries, journalistic investigations, and leaked scoops. [passage omitted]

Paper on Impending Gas Deals With Qatar, Egypt

TA1012184793

[Editorial Report] Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (MAMON supplement) in Hebrew on 10 December carries a page 7 report by Gid'on 'Eshet on Israel's plans to purchase gas from either the Persian Gulf or Egypt. The article asserts that the Middle East has changed in the wake of the agreement signed in Oslo between Israel and the PLO and "business deals between Israel, Egypt, and Qatar are now much more serious than previously thought."

'Eshet claims that Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and other Foreign Ministry officials were the first to establish contact with the Qatari Government and then moves on to explain the proposed deal: Qatar "would build a coastal terminal which would liquefy gas. The liquid would be transferred into expensive containers which would arrive in Elat. There, apparently offshore, another terminal would be constructed to collect the liquid gas and turn it into natural gas. The natural gas would be funneled through a pipeline to the Mediterranean sea coast. From there another pipeline, running along the sea floor, would funnel the gas onwards, apparently to Greece." The report notes that "in the first version, Qatar thought that another terminal would be built on the Israeli end of the Mediterranean sea, in which the gas would be liquefied and then loaded on to containers shipping gas to Europe."

After noting the economic drawbacks and high cost of this plan, YEDI'OT AHARONOT adds that "another possibility is shipping liquid gas through the Suez Canal to the Mediterranean Sea terminal which would save the cost of the expensive pipeline from Elat to central Israel." The paper then reports that the Israeli Energy Ministry this month asked six international companies to present their bids for a feasibility survey, independent of any survey conducted by the Qatar. The companies approached by Israel were: Arthur D. Little from England, Bateman of South Africa, British Gas, Supragaz from France, Tractebelle from Belgium, and CRE from the United States [all names of companies transliterated as published].

YEDI'OT AHARONOT reports that "Israel seeks to examine three projects: 1) Gas from the Persian Gulf to Elat, and then on to central Israel through a pipeline. 2) Gas from the Persian Gulf to an offshore terminal in the Mediterranean Sea. 3) Gas from Egypt directly to central Israel, apparently with a special outlet to the Gaza Strip."

The article explains that "the power plants in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Ashdod, which currently burn crude oil, will be converted to the use of natural gas. The possibility of supplying gas to industrial and even to household consumers will be examined."

The report states that "the international companies have been asked to examine the possibility of using the empty oil field at Helez and the almost empty, natural gas field near 'Arad as storage sites for the natural gas, in addition to storage locations in central Israel," also noting that "the companies seek to examine the possibility of Israel purchasing natural gas from the Persian Gulf states and from Egypt."

As for the plan's timetable, YEDI'OT AHARONOT writes that "the companies have been asked to issue tenders for economic feasibility surveys of the various options by 20 January." The paper then reports that "negotiations are underway on two parallel tracks," since "Egypt has also agreed to sell natural gas to Israel," noting that "officials from the Italian Agip company [name transliterated as published], which is in partnership with the Egyptians in oil and gas production, arrived in Israel on Wednesday [8 December] to discuss the Egyptian-Israeli gas project, among other things." The paper sees two reasons behind Egypt's sudden desire to sell gas to Israel: One, the agreement with the PLO, which, as reported earlier, has altered the political situation. Two, "the Qatari threat." Egypt fears that it will lose the large, neighboring Israeli market. YEDI'OT AHARONOT writes that when Qatar was asked why it wanted such a complex project instead of simply laying a pipeline through Saudi Arabia, they said that they did not want the Saudis controlling their gas flow. "At any rate, the paper asserts "Qatar will pay for transporting the gas to the Israeli terminal," while Israel will own the terminal itself as well as the pipes." 'Eshet adds that "the signing of an agreement is still conditional on the results of the feasibility survey and the approval of the Qatari and Israeli Governments." Such approval, if received will be given in two stages: There will soon be a meeting between two cabinet ministers from Qatar and Israel. Afterwards, the Qatari Government will issue a formal document by the end of the month."

YEDI'OT AHARONOT concludes that "at the moment, the Egyptian deal seems closed from the political aspect and is simply being evaluated in the economic sense. The Qatari deal has almost been closed with their gas company but is still pending government approval," which will be given "barring a major political crisis."

Czech Minister Confers With Peres, Rabin

Denies Arms Sales to Iran

TA1212204493 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Czech Foreign Minister Josef Zielenıec today arrived in Israel for a three-day visit, during which he will confer with President 'Ezer Weizman and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. Our correspondent Rivqa Neuman reports that the visiting minister began his visit with a tour of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem.

In the afternoon, Minister Zieleniec conferred with his Israeli counterpart Shim'on Peres. The two men held a working meeting, at the end of which they signed an agreement to annul double taxation. Also, progress was made toward signing an agreement which would obviate the need for visas to visit either country and would allow mutual investments.

Replying to a question, the Czech foreign minister said his government was not involved in the sale of know-how on the operation of nuclear reactors and nonconventional weapons to Iran. He promised that his country would not adopt what he termed unfriendly steps toward friends.

Rabin: Avoid Nuclear Sales to Iran

TA1312201693 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1930 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin called on the Czech Republic to avoid selling nuclear technology to Iran. In a meeting with the Czech foreign minister, who is currently visiting Israel, Rabin talked about the Iranian threat and the danger to regional stability if Iran achieves nuclear or other nonconventional capability. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports that the Czech foreign minister said that the deal to sell a nuclear reactor to Iran will probably not go ahead since the Iranians lack cash, and he made a commitment that the Czech Republic would not make what he called an unfriendly move toward Israel.

Peace Process Anxiety 'Substantiated'

AU1412110493 Prague CTK in English 2143 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Jerusalem Dec 13 (CTK)—Czech Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec said today the Israeli leadership's growing apprehension of opposition political parties and groups opposed to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process were substantiated.

Speaking with CTK after a meeting with Israeli Premier Yitzhaq Rabin, Zieleniec said the internal-political aspect of the talks was most serious.

Rabin fears whether the Palestinian leadership around Yasir 'Arafat will have enough strength to face the extremist forces in his own camp, Zieleniec said.

But he added that the Israeli Government believed an agreement with the Palestinians could be reached soon.

Mutual trust and belief in the success of the peace process has been the first condition fulfilled on the road towards a Middle East settlement, Zieleniec said.

He pointed out that he believed that Rabin was ready to hold talks with the Palestinians as long as he wielded a majority in parliament, and that he was ready to risk even his own party's prestige for the success of the talks.

'Highlights' of Economic Accord With PLO Cited

JN1312193093 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 Dec 93 p 11

["Highlights" of the draft Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement]

[Text] The two sides have agreed on the basic principles that define the joint fraternal relationship. These will be followed by detailed protocols and agreements that will cover the various issues that concern both fraternal people and strengthen their bilateral relations.

It has been agreed to define the framework of this cooperation on the following issues:

First: Relations on the official bilateral level.

Second: The role of the Jordanian and Palestinian private sectors in economy and development.

Third: The Arab and international relationship from a joint view.

With regard to the first and second levels, both sides agreed on the following:

I. In the field of banking and currency:
1. Establishing a joint monetary and banking committee that will periodically meet in both countries in order to agree upon financial, monetary, and banking policies for the interim Palestinian phase.
2. The joint monetary committee will lay down measures and policies regarding the following:
a. Monitoring currency, exchange rate, and way of dealing with these currencies.
b. Licensing banks, financial institutions, and money exchange companies and their branches.
c. Credit issues in terms of interest rates, reserve ratio, and any other measures related to controlling the size of credit.
d. Monetary measures related to issuing Jordanian currency banknotes and coins as well as withdrawal and substitution operations.
3. The committee will discuss setting up a Palestinian central monetary fund in order to undertake its responsibilities at the appropriate time.
4. The two sides agreed to adopt the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] in order to organize and reopen—during the interim period—the branches of the Jordanian banks that were closed in 1967 and to reopen currency exchanges and any other financial companies that used to receive deposits from people before 1967. In addition, the CBJ will continue to monitor the work and activities of these branches in accordance with the valid Jordanian laws.
5. The Jordanian and Palestinian parties, through the joint committee, shall agree on the licensing of new branches for Jordanian banks or the licensing of new national, Arab, and foreign banks. The monitoring and supervision roles of the CBJ shall cover any new banks or branches.
6. The two parties shall agree, in accordance with a detailed supplementary protocol, over the Palestinian authority's deposits in foreign currency and means of preserving them for import purposes and foreign transactions, and over the Palestinian authority's right to issue debt bonds to finance development. The two parties agreed to maintain the stability of the Jordanian dinar's exchange rate.
7. The dinar will remain in circulation in Palestine during the transitional phase.
8. It has been agreed to prepare studies and the necessary arrangements to enable the Palestinian public limited companies and joint companies to trade their shares in the Jordanian stock exchange and to cooperate to set up a Palestinian stock exchange.
9. To cooperate and participate in setting up specialized banks for development in the fields of housing, industry, and agriculture and to urgently work to set up a Palestinian development bank.

II. In the field of investment:

The two parties agreed to encourage and protect joint investments, provide incentives for them, and facilitate their work. They also agreed to guarantee the movement of capital, profits, and shareholders' dividends. They further agreed to provide the necessary facilities and create the atmospheres needed to encourage the private sector. They also agreed to establish major joint ventures and attract Jordanian and Palestinian funds abroad to help finance these projects, especially those that help support the economy's infrastructure and provide the necessary means for construction and reconstruction. The two parties also agreed to encourage the private sector to participate in the design and execution of housing, developmental, and infrastructure projects.

III. In the field of trade:

The two parties agree to:
1. Encourage the exchange of the two countries' agricultural and industrial national products, facilitate their transit, and provide the necessary exemptions.
2. Set up a committee to implement paragraph 1 above.
3. Increase trade exchange to the maximum possible level, whereby it does not drop below $300 million in the first year and increases gradually in the next two years.
4. Set up a joint free zone in the Jordan Valley for purposes of transit trade, industry, and joint investment.
5. Jordan shall facilitate the Palestinian trade movement, transportation, storage, and freight operations for reexporting purposes to the Arab countries and the world.
6. Rebuild King 'Abdallah Bridge and enlarge and renovate the other bridges. The two parties will also study the possibility of building other bridges to facilitate transportation and crossings.
7. The two sides shall use al-'Aqabah Port on the Red Sea and Gaza Port on the Mediterranean for their world trade. They will set the fees to be levied by each port.

IV. In the field of working forces:

The two parties agreed to exchange expertise, organize workers' right to compensation and social security, and reach an agreement to organize these issues. They also agreed to cooperate to establish a Palestinian social security.

V. In the field of double taxation:

The two sides decided to reach an agreement to avoid double taxation and fees.

VI. In the field of tourism:

The two sides agreed on the following:
1. Establishing joint tourism projects.
2. Cooperating to organize tours for groups of tourists and facilitating movement between the two countries.
3. Encouraging and promoting the tourist industry and establishing joint projects.
4. Benefiting from transportation in Jordan and establishing joint tourist transportation companies.
5. Cooperating to propagate historic sites in both countries.

VII. In the field of health:

The two sides agreed to promote and reorganize the health sector, provide services, encourage joint investments, and cooperate and coordinate in the medical industrial field.

VIII. In the field of agriculture:

The two sides agreed to encourage the private sector to establish a joint company in the free zone in the Jordan Valley to store, cool, market, and process agricultural products; to form a joint permanent technical committee to deal with all issues pertaining to agricultural marketing and ways of absorbing the surplus; to support joint scientific agricultural researches; to establish centers for agricultural research; and to encourage the private sector to invest in the field of agriculture.

IX. In the field of infrastructure—electricity, energy, water, and wire and wireless communications:

The two sides agreed to coordinate and cooperate to strengthen the infrastructure and link services together.

Regarding the third level of the agreement dealing with Arab and international relations, the two sides stressed their commitment to and concern about establishing and strengthening ties with joint Arab action institutions, the Arab League, the Islamic Conference Organization, the nonaligned countries, Third World countries, major industrial countries, the Scandinavian countries, Eastern European countries, Russia, and the Central Asian countries.

The two sides also agreed to consider establishing strong economic and political relations with the region's countries based on just, lasting, and comprehensive peace; recognizing the national rights of nations, particularly the Palestinian people; and establishing relations on the basis of equality and without hegemony and exploitation.

As the draft economic agreement between Jordan and the PLO has been prepared since last May, the question remains: Why has it been delayed up to now?

PLO Delay in Finalizing Accord Viewed

JN1312115393 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Dec 93 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Lamis K. Andoni]

[Text] Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasir 'Arafat's failure to sign a draft economic agreement with Jordan during his short visit to Amman last week is triggering serious political crisis that could undermine Jordan-PLO coordination and relations.

In press statements, Jordanian officials have implied that if Mr. 'Arafat refuses to sign Jordan might have to take unilateral steps to protect itself.

Jordan's main concern is that the PLO would seek an agreement with Israel that could deal a serious blow to the Jordanian dinar and threaten the Kingdom's financial stability.

PLO officials contacted in Tunis said that they hope that the Jordanian government would be patient with the PLO, especially since Mr. 'Arafat was expected to come under greater internal pressure to reach agreement with Jordan, following his meeting Sunday [12 December] with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The recent crisis between Jordan and the PLO has given rise to fears wtihin the PLO and among Jordanians that the lack of coordination between the two sides would only make all Arab parties involved, individually, more vulnerable to Israeli terms as each will be compelled to accommodate the Jewish state to protect its own interests.

Many PLO officials are disgruntled by Mr. 'Arafat's evasive attitude, especially that they believe the projected agreement with Jordan is crucial for disengaging the economy of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip from that of Israel.

But Mr. 'Arafat himself, according to PLO officials, is convinced that it is premature to sign the agreement in the belief that it could restrict his margin of manoeuvrability as his main priority is to attain international, Arab and Israeli recognition of Palestinian nationhood.

Mr. 'Arafat is said to have explained to PLO Executive Committee members prior to his arrival in Amman last week that he needed to first improve his position vis-a-vis Israel and the Western donors before signing the agreement with Jordan.

But the draft agreement, under which the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) will regulate monetary policies in the future Palestinian entity that will adopt Jordanian currency, has not been discussed in detail or ratified by the PLO Executive Committee.

The PLO leader has been seeking an Israeli approval of a Palestinian central bank and an independent Palestinian currency to ensure Palestinian sovereignty.

In fact Mr. 'Arafat claims, according to PLO officials, that Ahmad Quray' was not authorised to reach agreement with Jordan in the first place.

The Executive Committee, the officials say, was also not aware of Mr. Quray's mission last September but that was mainly due to the declining role of that top-level body as Mr. 'Arafat consolidated his one-man approach.

In November Mr. 'Arafat sent the head of the PLO Economic Department, Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, to modify the basic principles reached between Mr. Quray' and minister of state for Prime Ministry affairs, Jawad al-'Anani. The mission of Mr. al-Nashashibi was viewed as a tactic by Mr. 'Arafat to procrastinate until his position with Israel was clarified.

Following his return to Tunis, Mr. al-Nashashibi gave an interview to Jordanian evening daily, Akhir Khabar, in which he also disclosed the details of what was termed as the final draft agreement emphasising the need to give priority to Jordan over Israel.

Mr. 'Arafat's hesitation has provoked internal resentments within the PLO. Many officials argue that some kind of an arrangement should be worked out with Jordan before reaching further agreement with Israel.

Judging by interviews conducted by the Jordan Times, there seem to be three trends within the PLO regarding the issues:

—The first, represented mainly by Mr. 'Arafat, holds that there should be procrastination over the agreement pending better terms with Israel, which would pave the way for Palestinian sovereignty.

—The second trend calls for an immediate signing of the agreement lest the Palestinian economy become even more vulnerable to Israel's.

—The third supports an agreement with Jordan but argues that a clear political framework, at least between the two leaderships, should be worked out first.

The third trend seen to include most of the PLO Executive Committee members and Mr. 'Arafat's leading partners in the peace process.

Mr. 'Arafat's attitude has provoked serious criticism by his colleagues for ignoring the importance of Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

Mr. 'Arafat's supporters counter that the PLO leader is aware of the significance of the relationship with Jordan but wants to make sure that Arab states first acknowledge Palestinian sovereignty in any agreement signed.

"If Arab countries do not deal with the emerging entity as a nucleus for a state how should we expect Israel to acknowledge our nationhood?" asked one well-placed official who supports Mr. 'Arafat's position.

But most PLO officials disagree with Mr. 'Arafat's basic argument.

"If he is worried about any agreement encroaching on Palestinian sovereignty, why does he not at least start discussing the basis of the relationship at the PLO Executive Committee level and with the Jordanian leadership?" said one senior PLO official.

PLO officials point out that the higher Jordanian-PLO committee, which is supposed to follow up on coordination, has been reduced to a mere non-functional body.

Mr. 'Arafat seems to believe that delaying any kind of a binding agreement with Jordan would boost his position to strike a better bargain with Israelis.

But in practice, some PLO officials believe, the absence of coordination with Jordan will undermine the Palestinian position as Israel would try to dictate and consolidate its control over the Palestinian economy.

Mr. 'Arafat is said to have been alarmed by the Jordanian-Israeli memo signed in Washington last month that allows Jordanian banks to open or reopen branches in the occupied territories.

Some Jordanian analysts say that the Israeli-Palestinian accord, signed on Sept. 13 in Washington, has left no choice for Jordan but to reach arrangements with the PLO and Israel, separately, to protect itself.

Mr. 'Arafat's major argument has been that any agreement signed should be part of the long-term goal of establishing a Jordanian- Palestinian confederation between two independent states.

So far the declared Jordanian position that the future shape of the relationship could only be determined once the Palestinians in the West Bank become free to make their own choice.

The difference on whether or not the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship could be determined before the Israeli occupation ends is perhaps the major issue behind the lack of a clear and joint vision towards the future.

Palestinian critics of Mr. 'Arafat now argue that the PLO chairman has made it more difficult for himself to insist on a Jordanian-Palestinian relationship based on mutual recognition of two independent states after he signed an agreement with Israel that could jeopardise Palestinian sovereignty and impose on Jordan a framework for economic cooperation with Israel even prior to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Mr. 'Arafat is also said to be annoyed by Israeli claims that Jordan opposed Palestinian control over the bridges.

According to PLO officials, what Israel has told the PLO was that the control over the bridges was a matter that mainly concerned Jordan and Israel.

What is clear, though, is that Jordan would want guarantees that it will have a say over who crosses its territories and cannot be excluded from arrangements to regulate travel. One possible proposal that some in the PLO are expected to ask Mr. 'Arafat to adopt is to sign a security agreement with Jordan regarding the bridges and entry and exit of Palestinians who will cross Jordanian territory.

Rabin Blamed for Failure of Cairo Talks

JN1312105593 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 13 Dec 93 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "The Failure of 'Arafat-Rabin Meeting"]

[Text] Once again, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is maneuvering and placing new obstacles before the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord between Israel and the PLO. After U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher succeeded in persuading Rabin and 'Arafat to meet in Cairo, this meeting did not achieve positive results due to Rabin's hardline stand which rejects the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian self-rule area on the date fixed by the Gaza-Jericho agreement. Rabin's stand also rejects the transfer of power to the Palestinians as scheduled.

This is in addition to the deep differences between the two sides concerning sovereignty over crossing points and bridges to Egypt and Jordan from Gaza and Jericho. As for the issue of Jewish settlements as well, the Cairo meeting between Rabin and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat disappointed the Palestinian people in terms of proceeding according to the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

In continuation of the policy of maneuvering, prevarication, and procrastination, Yitzhaq Rabin insisted on postponing the Israeli military withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho until differences are settled between the two sides in another meeting between 'Arafat and Rabin that will be held in Cairo in 10 days time. And so, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher failed to settle the differences between Israel and the PLO, thus keeping the negotiations between the two sides without progress.

Observers in the region and in the international arena, especially within the Western circles, believe that Rabin's government is trying to wrest new benefits for Israel by hinting at the possibility of renouncing the Gaza-Jericho agreement and returning to square one.

Observers expect the tug-of-war between Israel and the PLO to continue until further notice, which will paralyze the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

Here, it is noteworthy that the activities of the Israeli and Palestinian opposition to the Gaza-Jericho agreement are continuously escalating. This will negatively reflect on the bilateral negotiations. If the negotiations on the Palestinian-Israeli track are deadlocked because of Israeli intransigence, then these negotiations will need a lot more time before they can resume in a positive direction. Hence, the fate of these negotiations remains unknown.

Finance Minister Presents 1994 Draft Budget

JN1312125693 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Dec 93 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Ayman al-Safadi]

[Excerpt] Amman—The government Sunday [12 December] presented the Lower House of Parliament with what Finance Minister Sami Qammuh described as the first "deficit-free" budget in the history of Jordan.

The general revenue, including grants and foreign aid, of JD [Jordanian dinars) 156 million, will completely finance the JD 1,487.1 million draft budget, Mr. Gammoh told the House in his budget speech.

The budget projects an estimated 8.7 per cent in general revenues over the reestimated revenues of 1993, with local revenues covering about 86 per cent of the total capital and current expenditures, he said.

Mr. Qammuh said the total expenditure was estimated at JD 1,487 million, reflecting an estimated increase of 11 per cent over the reestimation of 1993 expenditure.

An estimated JD 1,128.4 million constitute current expenditure, compared to the reesimated JD 1,049.3 million current expenditure of 1993, he said. He estimated capital expenditure at JD 357.7, compared to JD 292 million in reestimated expenditure in 1993.

Spending on defence and internal security was estimated at JD 378.1 million, financial management and subsidies to state institutions, basic food goods and debt servicing were estimated at JD 494.1 million and the economic development services were put at JD 249 million and the economic development services were put at JD 249 million.

The general management sector will receive JD 160 million, the international affairs sector JD 16.4 million, the social service and education sector JD 252.4 million and the cultural, youth, telecommunication and transportation sectors JD 81.1 million.

Domestic and foreign debt servicing was estimated at JD 300.1 million, compared with the reestimated JD 281.2 million for 1993.

About JD 66 million will be earmarked as an emergency budget to finance development and capital projects if financing was made available through grants, foreign aid or soft loans.

An estimated JD 495 million expenditure by public institutions is added to the government spending, bringing its total value to about JD 2 billion or 50 per cent of the estimated gross domestic product (GDP) for 1994.

Mr. Qammuh told the House that the government aims at achieving the following economic goals in 1994:

1. Achieving a growth of no less than 5.5 per cent in fixed prices in the GDP.

2. Reducing the general consumption in relation to the GDP from 99.3 per cent in 1993 to 97.8 per cent.
3. Lowering the deficit in the trade balance within the balance of payment as a percentage of the GDP from 10.4 percent in 1993 to 7.2 per cent.
4. Reducing the budget deficit after excluding the grants from 6.4 per cent of the GDP in 1993 to 5.3 per cent.
5. Keeping inflation at 4.5 per cent.
6. Maintaining the stability of the currency and building the country's foreign exchange reserves.
7. Improving the balance of payment through promoting exports, increasing the local production and encouraging export oriented industries.
8. Decreasing foreign indebtedness.
9. Improving the quality of life through effectively dealing with poverty and unemployment.
10. Charging the real cost of government services while improving its standards.
11. Keeping subsidies on basic food items and making sure that subsidies go to those who need them.

Mr. Qammuh said that the draft budget, which was based on the principles of attaining self-sufficiency and modernising economic legislation among other things, represents the government's economic plan in the third year of the economic adjustment programme.

He said the draft law was unique in that general revenues cover general expenditure, each of the Kingdom's eight governorates has independent budgets, and that it is designed to treat the problem of low productivity in the public and private sectors.

Mr. Qammuh said initial indictators point that the national economy continue to grow at a "good" level even though performance of some sectors was better in the first nine months of 1993 because they were affected by the "political events" in the last three months.

He said the GDP wasexpected to grow by six per cent by the end of 1993 due to the projected 12 percent growth in the construction sector, 10 per cent growth in the agricultural sector, and seven per cent in the trade sector.

He said, however, that a negative growth of 2.7 per cent is expected in the mining sector because of lower international prices, increased international consumption of phosphates and fertilisers.

Mr. Qammuh added that the continuation of the embargo on al-'Aqabah contributed to the negative growth of these industries because of the higher costs of transportation it led to. The mining industries contribute 12.6 per cent of the GDP with the private sector contributing only five per cent, he said, calling on the private sector to increase its contribution to productive industries.

The minister said the local consumption in relation to the GDP decreased by about three per cent, compared to 1992.

"This is a very positive indicator" he said.

Pointing that the volume of trade was stable in comparison with 1993, Mr. Qammuh said that a positive change in the kind of goods exchanged had occurred. The ratio of consumption goods imported in 1993 dropped to 38 per cent from 41 per cent in 1992.

The balance of services is expected to achieve a surplus of $1.6 billion in 1993, registering an increase of 10.5 per cent over 1992, said Mr. Qammuh.

He attributed the increase to the improvement in the performance of the tourism sector and increased remittances from Jordanian expatriates. He said the increase is expected to bring the deficit in the current account down to 10 per cent from 15 per cent in 1992.

Investment volume remained at the same level of 1992, with initial indicators pointing that it would reach 30 per cent of the GDP due to the high investment level achieved in that year when returnees from the Gulf brought new capital to the market.

The amount of industrial capital registered at the Ministry of Industry in November was JD 122 million, compared to JD 47 million in the same month in 1992.

Mr. Qammuh said the inflation was expected not to exceed 4.5 per cent by the end of the year. This rate and the salary increases that civil servants received in the year contributed to the improvement of the quality of life of limited and low income people.

Mr. Qammuh said the number of the work force is expected to reach 984,000 with 857,000 of them employed, thus keeping at 13 per cent the level of unemployment. This, the minister said, compares with the 18 per cent unemployment rate in 1991 when 763,000 of the 919,000-strong workforce were employed.

Mr. Qammuh said that a study conducted by the Department of General Statistics points that people living under the poverty line went down from 21.3 per cent in 1991 to 16.2 per cent in 1992, adding that the level was expected to decline further.

Mr. Qammuh outlined a govcernment programme aimed at fighting poverty and unemployment through maintaining economic growth, activating the employment and Development Fund, adopting a programme for employment rehabilitation and controlling the foreign labour market among other steps.

Mr. Qammuh said the government's monetary policy maintained currency stability, and led to an 18 per cent in private credits in the first eight months of the year. He said the government would maintain its policy of lifting all restrictions on currency transfers in the Jordanian dinar and linking its value to a basket of foreign currencies. He pointed out that the floating the interest rates contributed to financial and monetary stability in the country.

The minister said that the country's foreign currency reserves slightly declined in September because the country bought back $325 million of foreign debts and paid $673 million in debt servicing and repayment.

He said the volume of trade at the Amman Financial Market was expected to reach JD 1 billion, compared to JD 887 million in 1992, an increase of 12.7 per cent. He said the increase was expected even though the "wait-and-see" stand of the financial sector due to the latest political developments caused a recession in the last four months.

The minister said the performance of the general finance continued to improve as a result of the country's adherence to the social and economic adjustment programme. This performance could result in achieving a surplus of JD 26.3 million if grants are included, compared to a deficit of JD 48 million that was projected in the 1993 budget.

The deficit, excluding grants and foreign aid, went down to JD 116 million from a projected JD 203 million, a decrease of 43 per cent, said the minister.

Mr. Qammuh said the adherence to the economic adjustment programme, prescribed by the international Monetary Fund (IMF), helped reschedule foreign debts from commercial and government sources. This softened the impact of foreign indebtedness on Jordan and maintained the creditworthiness of the country, he said.

The government last June reached an agreement with the advisory committee of the London Club of commercial debtors to reschedule $895 million of foreign debts, the minister told deputies.

This agreement was signed in London Friday, he said. The deal resulted in lowering 60 per cent of the total foreign debts of the country. The annual burden of servicing these debts was also lowered by 50 per cent, he said.

The government reduced by $80 million the size of bilateral foreign debts by buying them back at 36 per cent of the pay-value. An agreement was also reached on rescheduling $387 million of foreign bilateral debts due in 1993, he said.

The minister said contracted but outstanding foreign debts will be the end of the year decrease by about $653 million, or 8.7 per cent of what they were in 1992. The balance of the drafted but unpaid debts is expected to decline by $616 million or 9.3 per cent of what it was in 1992.

He said a total of $673 million or 18 per cent of the total value of exports of goods and services was made in debt payment or servicing.

The value of the drafted and unpaid debts is expected to reach 117 per cent of the GDP, compared to 142 per cent in 1992, he said. The minister said the amount of domestic debts was expected to reach $1.1 billion.

Mr. Qammuh said the budget made a fair balance between taxes and expenditure, reminding deputies that they have to increase taxes if they wanted more government spending.

Pointing to the global economic decline, Mr. Qammuh said Jordan had defined its economic policy in light of the regional political changes which would have a large impact on its economy.

He said the government would seek to attain complementarity among Arab states and participate effectively in drawing the economic map of the region.

He said Jordan would seek full coordination concerning the Arab boycott of Israel once the peace process produces tangible and clear results, emphasising the government's intention to maintain economic and political coordination with the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Palestinian self-rule authorities in order to plan the future relationship in a way which guarantees the national interests of the two sides. [passage omitted]

Buwayz Comments on Peace Process, Visit to UK

NC1312190393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] The foreign minister will leave for London tomorrow on an official five-day visit at the invitation of his British counterpart, Douglas Hurd. During the visit, Buwayz will hold talks on the situation in Lebanon, the peace process, promoting bilateral ties, encouraging British capital to invest in Lebanon, and a contribution for the reconstruction of the country.

On the eve of his visit to London, Minister Buwayz has stressed that when Israel recognizes and honors the implementation of UN Resolution 425, Lebanon will be ready to join a joint military committee with Israel to establish a timetable for the implementation of this resolution.

In an interview with the BBC, Buwayz added that Lebanon is an essential part of any Arab decision on whether or not to make peace. It has an interest in the peace process, considering the problem of Palestinian refugees on its territory, he added. He noted that any resolution or recommendation by the United Nations must include all aspects of peace and that adding an explicit phrase on the General Assembly's commitment to the implementation of Resolution 425 would not be a problem if there was goodwill.

Minister Buwayz noted that progress on the Syrian track would reflect positively on all the other tracks, noting that Israel's lack of enthusiasm in implementing the Palestinian-Israeli agreement portends a negative attitude on the other tracks as well. The foreign minister noted that the recent Syrian-Lebanese summit was part of the consultations and coordination between the two countries. He pointed out that peace between the Arabs and Israel can be attained only through a unified Arab decision, and Lebanon and Syria are key elements in any possible Arab decision related to the peace process.

Regarding the U.S. secretary of state's failure to visit Lebanon, Minister Buwayz noted that this left a gap in his tour because some issues related to south Lebanon needed to be discussed.

On his visit to the British capital, Buwayz said that the purpose is to explain to the authorities the facts concerning the delicate situation in Lebanon, to hear the British views on the conflict in this region, and to discuss bilateral relations and ways to promote them.

Asked about remarks by Douglas Hogg, British minister of state at the Foreign Office, on the British Government's approval of selling arms to Lebanon provided they do not reach unofficial quarters, Buwayz pointed out that the Lebanese Army has proved enough of its credibility to be qualified to receive any type of weapons. He noted that the arms requests seek to boost the Army's role and its capabilities.

Comments Before Departing

NC1412073493 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0555 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Telephone dispatch by correspondent Darwish 'Ammar from Beirut airport—live]

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz left Beirut airport for London at 0730 [0530 GMT] today. The visit comes at the invitation of his British counterpart Douglas Hurd. Minister Buwayz is accompanied by a delegation comprising Ambassador Yusuf Arsanyus, director of the foreign minister's office; and Counselor Michel Dimyati. Minister Buwayz was seen off at the airport by British Ambassador Maeve Geraldine Forte and the chief of protocol at the Foreign Ministry. Minister Buwayz made the following comments on the nature of the visit:

[Begin recording] [Buwayz] The relations between Lebanon and Britain are longstanding and strong. Perhaps these relations were not so strong during the [Lebanese civil] war, but it is imperative now to activate these relations on all political, economic, and cultural levels. Certainly Britain has a long-standing history in the Middle East and this helps it to understand matters here more than any other country. Britain is currently playing an effective role, both at the UN Security Council and within the European group. Hence, this invitation aims at promoting the ties and relations on all levels.

[Unidentified correspondent] Do you have any [words indistinct] in the British capital in support of Lebanon in international bodies?

[Buwayz] No doubt my talks with the British officials will deal with the ongoing developments regarding the Arab-Israeli crisis. Also, this delicate stage through which the peace negotiations are passing will head our discussions. We believe that Britain's understanding and discernment of Middle East problems enables it to play an effective role in the peace process.

[Correspondent] In your opinion, how will Lebanon figure in the summit to be held between Clinton and al-Asad during the next few months?

[Buwayz] We said right from the start that peace must be comprehensive. We also said that any progress on any track is useful to all the other tracks. Therefore, any progress on the Syrian track will pave the way and resolve a basic obstacle.

[Correspondent] Do you believe that this summit could become a tripartite summit with the participation of President al-Hirawi?

[Buwayz] I believe that basically this summit will be held to discuss the Syrian track. I imagine that if this summit is successful it will give momentum to the negotiations which will be held in Washington next month.

[Correspondent] Do you intend to raise the issue of why Lebanon has not been (?mentioned) in the U.S.-Russian-Norwegian statement?

[Buwayz] The Lebanese stand is clear. We explained that we will reject any decision that does not include a clear-cut indication of Resolution 425, regardless of the interpretations given. [end recording]

'Awn Alleges New Wave of Syrian Arrests

PM1312124893 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Dec 93 p3

[Unattributed report: "We Have Been Told of New Arrests and Torture"]

[Text] London, AL-HAYAH—Former Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn has stated that he has received information that there has been a new wave of arrests in the al-Matn area. In a statement to AL-HAYAH, he added: "One of the regrettable and painful things is the continued unjustifiable torture of the detainees."

On the reasons for the torture, 'Awn said: "Ask those who carry out the torture. We know nothing but we emphasize that that method will fail to deter anyone from doing whatever is dictated by the national duty."

Were there really operations against the Syrian positions to justify the arrests? 'Awn replies: "From time to time we hear about operations against the Syrian forces. We cannot verify that information but Syria's nervous military conduct in some areas denotes fear and lack of control."

Could one say that the call for "armed resistance" has started? 'Awn replies: "So far we have not called for armed resistance but we affirm that the Lebanese have a right to resist. Such resistance is currently taking the form of rejection of the status quo but has not reached the point of armed action." He expressed the view that "there is not much left for the Lebanese to do except resist. There are no other options."

Junblatt Criticizes 'Clamor' Over Pope's Visit

NC1012152493 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Minister Walid Junblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, made the following statement at noon today: Amid the official and popular clamor over the publication of a distorted picture of the pope in [the Beirut-based weekly] AL- SAYYAD, we say: Thank God the Furayhah family [the magazine's owner] is an outstanding Christian Arab family. Had this technical mistake been made by a magazine of an Islamic nature, the storm would never have settled and we would all have been accused of fanaticism, sectarianism, and so on.

But at the same time, we wonder why there is an official and nonofficial clamor, when no one in Lebanon dared to react to or condemn Bill Clinton's meeting with Salman Rushdie. Is it because Muslims are a commodity bought and sold anytime and can be insulted? Or are there are other reasons? As we learned later, Clinton apologized to rectify his mistake. But we heard nothing from the Lebanese Government or from the Foreign Ministry the inclinations and background of which we know well.

As for the pontiff's visit to Lebanon, we would like to advise him that if he wants to come to Lebanon amid an atmosphere of internal differences and while some are using their churches to call for indiscriminate withdrawal—specifically, the withdrawal of the Syrian forces without mentioning the Israeli presence—then perhaps his visit, and we know and understand his wisdom, is not in order.

We also heard that his messengers and ambassador came to al-Shuf [Druze-dominated region] to inspect sites for a forthcoming celebration. We hope things won't be done hastily and we hope they won't rush to take him to al-Shuf to cover up their sectarian schemes and hidden hatred. We will wait and see if he must visit al-Shuf or not; al-Shuf is no one's parish. It will remain an Arab region. We fought and paid dearly for its survival and expansion. We are ready at any moment to fight for the Arab identity of the mountain, Iqlim al-Tuffah, Beirut, and the south.

Amal Detonates Device Against 'Enemy Patrol'

NC1312171193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] An explosive device was detonated against an agent [South Lebanese Army] patrol along the Dayr Siryan road this afternoon. According to security information, one of the patrol members was wounded.

AFP has quoted a statement distributed by the Amal Movement in Tyre as saying that a group of its members detonated an explosive device against an enemy patrol passing along the Dayr Siryan road. All members of the patrol were either killed or wounded, according to the statement. The statement noted that eyewitnesses had confirmed that two bodies were seen at the scene of the operation and that ambulances rushed to the region to evacuate the wounded.

AFP reported that following the operation, the Israeli shelling was resumed. The shelling targeted three villages adjacent to the security zone.

Iranian Vice President, Delegation Pay Visit

Habibi, Khaddam Make Statements

JN1312111993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1015 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Iranian Vice President Dr. Hasan Habibi arrived in Damascus at 0930 today on a visit to Syria that will last several days. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Nasir Qaddur, Syrian Ambassador to Iran Ahmad al-Hasan, and Iranian Ambassador in Damascus Hasan Akhtari received him at the airport. [passage omitted]

In a statement to SANA, Dr. Habibi said: This visit is part of the periodic meetings held by the Joint Iranian-Syrian Higher Committee to discuss issues of common concern. He added: It is natural that topics related to developing bilateral relations will be discussed. During this visit, we will discuss issues of concern to the two countries as well as regional and international issues and ways of joint cooperation.

Khaddam told the reporters accompanying Habibi: The Iranian-Syrian relations are very good; they are continuously growing due to the fact that they are built on strong bases and foundations. These relations proved in the past years that they serve the two countries' interests as well as the interests of the peoples' causes in the region. He added: We will discuss, as Dr. Habibi said, issues of common concern as well as regional, bilateral, and international issues. We hope to reach unified conclusions that will help us all confront the major issues facing us.

Dr. Habibi is accompanied by a delegation comprising Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, minister of foreign affairs; Dr. Ne'matzadeh, minister of industries; Mr. Reza'i, official in charge of hajj and visits; Mr. Ta'ebi, Dr. Habibi's secretary; Mr. Mohajeri, director of Dr. Habibi's office; Mr. Morteza'i, deputy minister of industry; in addition to directors of the Foreign Ministry departments and technicians.

Vice Presidents Lead Committee Meetings

JN1312201993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpts] The Syrian-Iranian Higher Joint Committee held a round of talks at 1800 today. The talks were led by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Iranian Vice President Dr. Hasan Habibi. [passage omitted]

The committee began by reviewing its agenda, and then discussed latest international developments and their reflections on the interests of the two countries.

The committee will resume its meetings tomorrow morning. [passage omitted]

Topics of 13 Dec Meeting Detailed

NC1412075293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] The first round of talks between the high-ranking delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Syria headed by Habibi and Khaddam, first vice presidents of the two countries, were held in Damascus last night. During the talks, which were also attended by the two countries' ministers of foreign affairs and ministers of industry, they studied bilateral issues, regional and international developments, and problems of the Islamic world, especially the developments in Palestine and Lebanon.

At the talks Iranian First Vice President Habibi explained the Islamic Republic's viewpoints on various issues and underlined the need to preserve the Islamic countries' unity and solidarity. Lauding the Islamic Republic's role in the region and in the world, 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam called for expanding and bolstering relations between the two countries.

During the talks, the two sides lauded the role of the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon and stressed the need to resist the Zionist regime.

Talks Continue; Habibi Meets Nasrallah

LD1412113293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] [Announcer] The second round of talks between the high-ranking delegations of Iran and Syria were held today in Damascus. The Central News Unit's dispatched correspondent in Syria reports:

[Correspondent] At this round of talks, led by Dr. [Hasan] Habibi and 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, first vice presidents of Iran and Syria respectively, the two sides exchanged views over issues of interest to both countries and achieved some results. Mr. Habibi referred to the Islamic Republic of Iran's support for Syria and noted that Syria is a country that has always been in the front of resistance against the Zionist regime. Our country's first vice president considered that the agreement between 'Arafat and Israel was aimed at implementing the expansionist policies in the region. He emphasized the need to liberate all the occupied territories.

In the course of his remarks on the latest developments concerning Palestine, Mr. Khaddam pointed out his country's unswerving stance regarding peace with Israel and considered that the recent agreement between the PLO and the Zionist regime is a bridge to facilitate the Zionist regime's hegemony over the Arab world.

[Announcer] Another report from our correspondent in Damascus states: This morning, Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, leader of the revolutionary Hizballah movement of Lebanon and some other officials of that movement, met and conferred with First Vice President Mr. Habibi. At the meeting which was also attended by Foreign Minister Velayati, Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah briefed Mr. Habibi on the latest developments in Lebanon and the situation of the revolutionary Hizballah movement in its confrontation with the Zionist regime in the region.

For his part Mr. Habibi emphasized the need to preserve Lebanon's unity and defined the solidarity and unity of anti-Zionist forces in southern Lebanon as vital.

Committee Attendees, Agenda Reported

JN1412142893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] The Higher Syrian-Iranian Joint Committee resumed its meetings at 1015 today under Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Hasan Habibi, the Iranian first vice president.

The meeting was attended for Syria by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; Industry Minister Ahmad Nizam-al-Din; Raslan 'Alush, assistant foreign minister; Walid Rajab, director of the Foreign Ministry's Asia Department; and Ahmad al-Hasan, Syria's ambassador in Tehran.

For Iran, the meeting was attended by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati; Industries Minister Mohammad Ne'matzadeh; Khansari, director general of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Political Affairs Department; Mahmud Hashemi, director general of the Foreign Ministry's Middle East Department; and Hasan Akhtari, Iran's ambassador in Damascus.

The conferees discussed all aspects of the situation in the Middle East.

Vice President Khaddam then reviewed all developments concerning the political process, stressing a just and comprehensive peace based on UN resolutions and international legitimacy. In this regard, the Syrian and Iranian parties expressed concern over the fact that the draft resolution presented by the United States, Russia, and Norway to the UN General Assembly has ignored UN Security Council Resolution 425 on Lebanon.

Al-Asad Receives Habibi

JN1412142393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] At 1300 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Dr. Hasan Habibi, first vice president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and his delegation, which is comprised of Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati; Industry Minister Mohammad Ne'matzadeh; Khansari, director general of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Political Affairs Department; and Mahmud Hashemi, director general of the Foreign Ministry's Middle East Department.

The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam; Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; Ahmad al-Hasan, Syria's ambassador in Tehran; and Hasan Akhtari, Iran's ambassador in Damascus.

Rejection of 4-Phase Withdrawal Plan Viewed

JN1412113793 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 7 Dec 93 p 5

[Editorial by Fu'ad Mardud: "Christopher in the Trap"]

[Text] The Israeli ambassador to the United States and head of the Israeli negotiating team with Syria, Itamar Rabinovich, declared in Washington two weeks ago that the "U.S. and Israel have concluded an agenda of priorities in the Middle East peace talks. Syria comes third on the list."

U.S. officials have not responded to Rabinovich's statements, neither confirmed nor denied them. But what is leaking from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's negotiations with Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and his Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres did confirm the existence of such a list; "both Rabin and Peres acknowledged to Mr. Christopher that Israel cannot afford to reach a deal with Syria before digesting the Gaza-Jericho accord with the Palestinians and before reaching a suitable agreement with Jordan." Radio Israel said on Sunday Dec. 5. Once again, the Americans did not confirm nor deny.

What Mr. Christopher did hear in Damascus is something different; peace must be met with full withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, separate deals are not accepted, secret talks with Israel are rejected, and Israel must abide by U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 which form the basis of the Madrid Middle East peace conference.

Mr. Christopher also heard in Damascus an open and frank rejection of the Israeli "four-phase withdrawal in return for immediate peace with Syria" plan. He did try to break the ice and made a great attempt to convince Damascus that his administration still wants to make comprehensive peace in the region. But until he presents a full plan to reactivate the peace talks, and until he comes up with a comprehensive U.S. policy for reaching a collective peace by tackling all tracks at the same time, all assurances he is bringing with him from both Washington and Tel Aviv remain meaningless.

Syria could accept scheduling the coming round of the Washington talks, only if Mr. Christopher brings with him concrete and explicit guarantees of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan heights. Otherwise, all his efforts will mean nothing, because if he could not conclude this job successfully, he certainly will not be able to come up with a magic package that can get the acceptance of all parties in the region, especially after Rabin's rejection of his own-invented formula of "gradual peace for gradual withdrawal" and after he has attempted to kill the idea of "full peace-for-full withdrawal".

Press Views Upcoming al-Asad-Clinton Summit

JN1012132793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 10 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The commentaries and political analyses of our newspapers today highlight the Geneva summit due to be held between His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton. They underscore the importance of this meeting for the peace process, noting that all international quarters will be interested in this meeting. They address Syria's important role, the constants governing its position, its concern to render the peace process a success, as well as its adherence to the need for Israel to effect a complete withdrawal from the occupied Golan and all other occupied Arab territories.

The newspaper TISHRIN addresses the importance of the meeting due to be held between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton, affirming that the mere holding of this meeting will promote the peace process and consecrate the objective of achieving just and comprehensive peace, which Syria has striven to realize for many long years.

TISHRIN adds: This meeting will reflect Syria's key role in the peace process. It will also show that the U.S. Administration pins great hopes on the contributions Syria can make to help achieve a durable and lasting peace. Syria, in the person of President al-Asad, has been extremely clear since the launching of the U.S. peace initiative. It has announced that the achievement of peace is contingent on the dismantlement of the occupation and the restoration of the occupied territories. Likewise, Syria said that the Golan is Syrian territory, that there can be no bargaining over or abandonment of the Golan, that there can be no compromises on the Golan, and that the full return of the Golan to the motherland is a must.

Concluding its commentary, TISHRIN says: The meeting due to be held between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton will produce positive results, and lend strong momentum to peace efforts. President al-Asad will be a staunch defender of the higher pan-Arab interests. He will argue for the achievement of just and comprehensive peace, which must result in the dismantlement of the Israeli occupation and the return of all occupied territories to their owners. His argument in this regard will be cogent, the paper notes.

Under the headline "There Can Be No Peace Without Syria," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH, in a commentary published today, addresses Syria's important position and the constants governing it, noting the appreciation of Syria's cooperation to advance the peace process to bring it to a successful conclusion as expressed by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher when he was received by His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday. During this meeting, Christopher affirmed that Syria is an extremely important regional player in the peace process.

AL-THAWRAH adds: This U.S. appreciation of Syria's cooperation to advance the peace process and this U.S. acknowledgement of Syria's importance in this process reaffirm that there can be no peace without Syria, and that Syria's positions toward the peace process, its foundations, and its terms of reference have always been marked by clarity, positiveness, seriousness, and a sound perspective.

The paper goes on to say: The peace process is being linked to Syria, because the Syrian position toward the peace process and its objective is based on a clear foundation, namely, adherence to the Madrid formula, the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy, and the principle of land for peace. This conformity between the Syrian position on the one hand, and the Madrid formula as well as the international terms of reference agreed upon for this formula on the other, has underscored Syria's important position and its sound peace perspective inasmuch as it has revealed that Israel's antipeace policy is behind the failure of all peace efforts. It is because of Israel's intransigent position that no progress has thus far been made in the peace talks. Worse still, Israel has deliberately and premeditatedly wasted many opportunities which could have been used to expedite the achievement of the objective of the peace process spelled out in Madrid.

Addressing the constants governing the Syrian position toward the peace process, the newspaper AL-BA'TH notes the agreement to hold a summit between His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva in January. The paper underscores the importance of this summit for the Middle East peace process.

AL-BA'TH adds: Syria's position has not changed since the start of the peace process in Madrid. Syria has continued to affirm that it supports all efforts to advance the peace process to allow it to achieve just and comprehensive peace. This fact was reiterated by His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad when he met with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday. During this meeting, his excellency the president said that Syria, which contributed to the launching of the peace process, will continue to work positively to render it a success, and to allow it to achieve the objective set for it.

The paper indicates that the requirements and components of just and comprehensive peace are extremely clear. It adds that the peace process was grounded in these requirements and components. However, Israel, the paper notes, has continued to pursue a policy based on maneuvering and procrastination to evade the requirements and components of peace, although the entire world community is well aware that there can be no durable and lasting peace in the region unless Israel commits itself fully to meeting the requirements of just and comprehensive peace.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: Syria, which is responding favorably to all efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region, would like to reiterate anew that full and complete withdrawal from the Golan and all other occupied Arab territories will create the objective circumstances for the achievement of the desired peace.

Commentary on Importance of Summit

JN1212154893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The expected summit between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton received great attention from political circles all over the world. Observers consider such a summit an entrenchment of Syria's role in the Middle East and an opportunity to push the obstructed peace process forward.

The U.S. secretary of state announced a series of measures to break the current stalemate in the peace talks. Such measures included inviting the heads of the Syrian and Lebanese delegations to Washington in order to hold preliminary talks and then to hold a meeting for the heads of the participating delegations to prepare for a new round of talks. Still, the meeting between President al-Asad and President Clinton remains the most important and prominent event. It is evidence of the U.S. conviction that no peace is possible in the Middle East other than a just and comprehensive peace in which Syria has a key position because of its political and pan-Arab leverage in the region and because the formula for a just and comprehensive peace was Syria's formula from the beginning. Syria has been seeking to present such a formula since the early 1970's.

The fact is that the serious events that surrounded the secretly negotiated Gaza-Jericho agreement made many in this world realize that the only entrenched peace is the comprehensive one Syria has been calling for—not for the sake of achieving regional gains but for the sake of reaching a real solution to Middle East crisis, a solution acceptable to the present generation, one that can be maintained by future generations, and is capable of standing against events and developments.

The Gaza-Jericho agreement did not hold up for more than several weeks and disappointed all the Palestinian people. It turned the occupied territories into a arena of confrontation and escalation. If Israel had responded to the proposals for a just and comprehensive peace that Syria presented after the end of the sixth round, and if it abandoned the policy of separate deals and singling out Arab parties and adhered to the UN Security Council resolutions, the Palestinian arena would not be in its current state of escalation. Peace would have been accessible to the countries in the region.

Through the Oslo agreement with the Palestinian side, Israel sought to sabotage the Madrid formula and isolate Syria and cast doubts on its sincere peaceful intentions. However, consequent events triumphed for Syria and its proposals and confirmed that there can be no peace without Syria, and that there can be no peace if it is not just and comprehensive. Just and comprehensive peace is peace that ends the occupation, returns the territories to their owners, and presents solutions to the various aspects of the Arab- Israeli conflict.

The U.S. secretary of state said in Damascus that the Madrid formula is the adopted and existing formula. He added that the meeting between President al-Asad and Clinton should lay the cornerstone for efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace. Chrisopher also appreciated Syria's cooperation with the United States to push the peace process forward.

For his part, the president said Syria, which contributed to launching the peace process, will continue positive work in order to render this process a success and achieve its desired goal. In other words, a Middle East not threatened by wars and conflicts, one that devotes its efforts to the process of reconstruction and contributes to the contemporary human march.

The U.S. secretary of state was very clear when he focused on Syria's very important role in achieving peace when he announced that the United States is determined to play the role of a full partner. The United States will surely find that Syria is a party committed to pushing the peace process forward. It will find that President al-Asad is an Arab leader who straightens out matters and does not get dragged into wrong or hesitant positions that lead to wrong and reckless results.

During his meeting with President Clinton, President al-Asad will not only be Syria's loud and influential voice but will be the voice of all Arabs, defending their pan-Arab interests. He will be the voice of firm and real peace, an honorable peace that alone can transform the Middle East from a state of war and confrontations to a state of stability and prosperity, in which there is no occupation, oppression, and repression and in which rights and territories are returned to their owners.

Belief in peace must lead to peace. Syria believes in peace just as much as it believes in its land. It is concerned about peace just as much as it is concerned about the Golan and Arab rights. President Clinton will sense from President al-Asad this belief in and concern about peace, just as this was sensed by U.S. Presidents Carter and Bush. President Clinton can surely shorten the stages of time and seek to translate the hopes for peace into a tangible reality in the Middle East.

Press on Need for 'Genuine and Firm Peace'

JN1212095993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 12 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] TISHRIN discusses the expected meeting between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton. The paper notes that the international political quarters, the EC, and world figures have welcomed this meeting, which they view as a support for the peace process in view of Syria's key role in the Middle East.

The paper also discusses Israel's attempts to circumvent the bases of the Madrid conference and to replace the just, comprehensive peace formula with separate deals and partial, interim settlements, which have gravely harmed the peace process. In this regard, the paper refers to the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which was secretly negotiated in Oslo and subjected to clamorous Israeli propaganda. It has been revealed, however, that the big loopholes in the agreement and contradictory interpretations of it are such that the Palestinian people, instead of moving to a state of peace and security, have been subjected to the fiercest campaigns of repression, torture, and terrorism.

TISHRIN affirms that separate deals have not only yielded adverse results, but also threaten the overall peace process. It has been revealed that Syria's warnings were well-founded, and that there must be a return to the Madrid formula, the UN Security Council resolutions, and the objective of achieving a just, comprehensive peace on all fronts of the conflict if the peace process is to achieve the aspired results.

The paper adds: Hence, observers viewed Christopher's efforts to revive the Washington talks and the expected meeting between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton as a boost to the just, comprehensive peace formula and an attempt to salvage the peace process from the course of separate deals. Syria has explained that it will spare no effort to make the peace process successful. However, **TISHRIN** says, for the Middle East to move to a state of genuine and firm peace, does not depend on Syria alone. There is no alternative to Israel's response to the UN resolutions and to a clear and explicit commitment by it to withdraw from the entire Golan Heights and all other occupied territories.

Concluding its comment, **TISHRIN** affirms that President al-Asad is not a man who would relinquish Arab territory and rights or accept compromises over the Arab future. For him, there is no alternative to the return of all occupied territories to their rightful owners. This is a basic peace prerequisite. There is no peace under occupation. Any incomplete peace will not be supported by the Arab masses.

AL-THAWRAH affirms that Syria's serious and sincere response to the U.S. secretary of state's efforts played a key role in these positive results. This response had a key role in reviving the peace hopes and energizing the peace process. As a result of Israel's provocative, intransigent stands, and because of Israel's continuous refusal to be committed to the bases and conditions of peace, the peace process almost lost its credibility. Most conspicuous among these conditions is that any peace must be comprehensive and must mean full withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories.

AL-THAWRAH adds: During his visit, Christopher expressed appreciation for Syria's cooperation to advance the peace process toward the agreed-upon objective. This reflects Syria's positive and constructive stand on all that would firmly establish the pillars of a just, comprehensive solution to the conflict in the region. Moreover, Christopher's appreciation refutes Israel's false allegations and expressly reflects the credibility of Syria's position. It was Syria which first opened the doors for peace and it spares no effort to attain this noble human objective for which all mankind works.

AL-THAWRAH notes that Syria has time and again announced that it supports a just, comprehensive peace in the region and a peace that restores the land and rights to their owners. Everyone has come to realize that Syria wants peace. Peace cannot be divided or achieved step by step. Peace cannot meet ephemeral interests and expansionist evil dreams.

Concluding its comment, the paper says that proceeding from an unshakable belief in the sanctity of Arab territory and rights and from a firm, principled, and uncompromising stand on Arab just, legitimate demands, Syria will continue to aspire for peace.

Afghanistan

Rabbani Meets With Acting Prime Minister

LD1312180693 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, this morning received Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad, acting prime minister, and a number of the cabinet members at the presidential palace.

The press department of the presidency told the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY that during the meeting the esteemed president spoke about the present situation and the necessities of Afghan society, and drew the attention of the cabinet members to their critical Islamic and national duties before the homeland and the people.

Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani added: Today the persecuted people of the homeland and the peple of the world closely watch the situations and developments in the country. Members of the government have the duty to make sincere and untiring efforts toward maintaining the needs of the people and the elimination of their problems, the establishment of security, and the stability of the situation in order to provide conditions for the speedy reconstruction of the country. The state leaders would provide every possible assistance to the government toward this end.

In reply, esteemed Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad, acting prime minister, on behalf of the cabinet members, assured that the members of the government are ready for every sort of sincere effort in alleviating the needs of the Muslim and persecuted people of the country. He promised to carry out his duties in a manner suitable to the present moments of our Islamic society.

Appointment of Acting Prime Minister Viewed

LD1312204093 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] The president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan entrusted the authority of the prime minister's office to esteemed Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad and instructed relevant departments to cooperate with him in this regard. A political commentator of BIA writes:

Entrusting the authority of the prime minister's office to esteemed Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad, deputy leader of Hezb-e Eslami-e Afghanistan [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], results from Afghanistan's attention to the speedy solution of the present crisis in the country. This indicates that Afghanistan is making efforts to prepare the ground for understanding and the creation of coordination in work.

Aziz Morad, head of the presidency's press department, told the BIA political commentator that, during his eight months as prime minister, Golboddin Hekmatyar was not able to come to Kabul city and begin his work [words indistinct]. As a result of clashes during his term in office, he [words indistinct] was not able to travel to even one province of the country. Esteemed Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad gets along well with everybody and will be able to carry out the duties that Hekmatyar was unable to do.

The BIA political commentator adds that Afghanistan is simply trying to eliminate the administrative crisis in the country and solve problems. Several times during Golboddin Hekmatyar's term in office, obstacles got in the way of government officials who wanted to travel to Charasiab for a meeting. Because of this, a number of people predicted the new cabinet's failure from the very beginning. Entrusting the authority of the prime ministry to esteemed Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad eliminates this problem as a whole, and it has been said that Waqad enjoys good relations with neighboring countries and could succeed in comprehensively expanding and deepening Afghanistan's international relations in accordance with the its aims. In an interview with the BBC, Waqad said that he wants to bring about a united and legitimate government, so that Afghanistan's political (?isolation) could end. Political observers believe that entrusting the authority of the prime ministry to Waqad is an important step toward the creation of understanding and the cessation of war. If obstacles are not created from Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami, the cabinet will be able, under the leadership of esteemed Waqad, to resolve the (? present crisis).

Attempt To Smuggle Najibollah Out of Kabul Foiled

PM1412115893 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan report: "Attempt To Smuggle Najibollah Through Afghan Capital Airport Fails"]

[Excerpts] Peshawar—Reliable Afghan sources told AL-HAYAH yesterday that security forces at Kabul international airport foiled an attempt three days ago to smuggle former (communist) President Najibollah out of the country.

The sources stated that Najibollah was moved to the airport by civilian vehicles belonging to the UN office. The vehicle carrying him tried to move to the runway, where a helicopter was waiting for him with its engine running. But the security men entrusted with protecting the airport—supporters of former Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud—identified Najibollah and contacted Mas'ud, who ordered them to prevent the former president from leaving and to return him to the UN office. [passage omitted]

The sources believe that the plan was to move Najibollah to Mazar-e Sharif (in north Afghanistan), where Uzbek militias led by General Abdul Rashid Dostam are in control, and then to another place. As is known, Kabul airport is divided into two sections: a military section led by the militias and a civilian section controlled by Mas'ud's supporters. [passage omitted]

Arabs Killed, Captured in Fighting Near Kabul

PM1312114093 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Dec 93 p1

[Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan report: "Increasing Number of Arab Victims in the Battles Raging in Kabul Suburbs"]

[Excerpts] Peshawar—Reliable Arab and Afghan sources told AL-HAYAH yesterday that the number of dead and wounded among the Arabs and Pakistanis fighting within the ranks of Hezb-e Eslami has risen as a result of the battles currently raging in Kabul suburbs.

The Afghan sources said that four Arabs were killed in Tagab valley northeast of Kabul while fighting alongside the forces of Hezb-e Eslami, which is led by Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar. [passage omitted]

It has been rumored that Jamiat-e Eslami has captured a number of Arab fighters from the Hezb-e Eslami ranks after launching a successful attack on Tagab in which it managed to regain most of the positions it lost a month ago. Tagab is known to be one of the strongholds of former Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, the strong man of Jamiat-e Eslami, which is led by President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

Hezb-e Eslami sources have admitted that a number of Arabs were killed but refused to confirm that some Arabs were taken prisoner. They told AL-HAYAH yesterday that the Arab victims included a Libyan whose nom de guerre was Abu-Tammam, an Algerian known as Abu-Darda', one from the Gulf whose identity has not been revealed, and another Arab whose identity has not been revealed either.

Hezb-e Eslami launched a major offensive the day before yesterday to regain positions lost to the Jamiat-e Eslami forces led by the former defense minister. The Jamiat-e forces had occupied most of Tagab valley. Hezb-e Eslami admitted that. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Civil Servants Threaten 'Mass Resignations'

BK1412115693 Hong Kong AFP in English 1134 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 14 (AFP)—Bangladesh's 70,000 public professionals and civil servants threatened "mass resignations" unless the government agreed to their demand for reforms, a spokesman said Tuesday [14 December].

"We have come to this stage after 18 months of campaigning for reforms despite the fact that the government agreed to implement major and pro-people demands in April," a spokesman for PROKICHI-Bangladesh Civil Service Central Action Committee told AFP.

He said a three-day protest, dubbed a "mass holiday," ended successfully Monday and "we have no alternative but to go for mass resignation from Wednesday unless an agreement is reached before that."

Bangladesh's service and medical sectors were disrupted for the past three days as engineers, doctors, agriculturists and 26 civil service cadres joined the campaign in support of their 17-point demands.

The spokesman said they would call off their resignation plans if the government immediately implemented four demands.

They were the separation of the judiciary from the administration, appointment of professionals to the functional cadres, transfer of executive powers to elected representatives and restructuring of the present bureaucracy.

"The cabinet committee has discussed the issue," an official source said, while the leading DAILY STAR newspaper reported that the authorities were likely to take firm action against the protestors.

The government earlier warned its officials to follow government rules of conduct or face legal action.

During the "mass holiday," patients went untreated, work slowed down in most government offices and a holiday mood prevailed in different public and autonomous bodies.

Official Views Problems With India

BK1212132693 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Bangladesh has been making every possible effort to resolve amicably all outstanding issues with India, including the water sharing and Chakma refugee questions. This was stated by the outgoing foreign secretary of Bangladesh, Reaz Rahman, while talking to newsmen in Dhaka Sunday. Mr. Reaz Rahman, who is going to take over as the Bangladesh permanent representative at the United Nations, identified two other major issues between Dhaka and New Delhi and these are land and maritime boundaries and cooperation in economic front. In this context, Mr. Rahman said cooperation and not confrontation help solve irritants among different countries. Bangladesh foreign secretary also said necessary steps have been taken to resolve the Rohingya refugee problem with Myanmar [Burma] judiciously. He said Dhaka being very tolerant and law-abiding always believes in peaceful solution of regional as well as global issues on the basis of sovereignty, equality, and noninterference in others' internal affairs.

India

Ministers Discuss Ties With U.S. Senators

BK1312161493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] The U.S. Senator Larry Pressler says his amendment blocking military and economic aid to Pakistan is unlikely to be repealed. Addressing a joint news conference with Republican senators—Mr. Hank Brown and Mr. Thad Cochran—in New Delhi today, Mr. Pressler said he will fight to keep his amendment in one form or the other. The U.S. taxpayers' money, he said, cannot be squandered for the development of nuclear weapons elsewhere in the world. The three senators expressed their view that the U.S. perceptions of nuclear nonproliferation will not affect its trade ties with India. On Indo-Pak relations, both Mr. Pressler and Mr. Brown said their understanding is that the Clinton administration is not going to dictate the course of events, particularly on Kashmir.

The three U.S. senators held wide-ranging discussions with the external affairs minister and the home minister. Mr. Dinesh Singh told them that India is ready to work with the United States to promote genuine disarmament. Mr. S.B. Chavan reiterated India's commitment to human rights. He, however, made it clear that the rights of the militants' victims should not be ignored. About the situation in Kashmir, Mr. Chavan said the efforts to restore a democratically elected government are being frustrated by the continued interference of Pakistan.

Pakistani Failure To Find Suspects 'Regretted'

BK1312085293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] New Delhi has regretted that there is no positive response so far from Pakistan in apprehending the Memon brothers who were behind the Bombay blasts. Replying to a question in the Lok Sabha today, the minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, said that India supplied detailed information to Islamabad on the presence of the Memon family in Pakistan. The matter was also taken up at various levels with Pakistan authorities to locate and return them to India, but there is no positive response from Pakistan, he said.

Indian Forces Kill 17 in Kashmir Clashes

BK1312143393 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Reports from occupied Kashmir say another 17 people have been martyred by the occupation Indian forces. Ten people were martyred during siege and search operation in Kupwara and Kishtwar areas, while two youths were burned alive in Badgam area. The occupation forces set ablaze 30 houses in Gangapura and rounded up several people during severe crackdown. A number of Indian troops are reported killed and injured in a clash with mojahedin in Kishtwar. Complete strike was observed throughout the occupied valley to protest against the continuing Indian brutalities. Reports say all the business centers, bazaars, government offices, and educational institutions remained closed, with traffic off the road. Anantnag, Islamabad, Kulgam, (Shangaf), and some other districts are under curfew.

Commentary on SAARC Cooperation With Other Groups

BK1212042293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Commentary by Ratan Saldi]

[Text] Even though the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] charter clearly stipulates strengthening of cooperation with other developing countries and international and regional organizations, SAARC has more or less remained very inward looking till recently. However, realizing the usefulness of cooperation, the seven-nation South Asian regional body has now started linkages with other organizations having similar aims and purposes.

The latest step in this direction has been the signing of an agreement of cooperation between the SAARC and the UNICEF for the implementation of programs for children and women. They agreed to plan and implement joint studies on education, nutrition, primary health care, and rights of these deprived sections of society. Earlier, in September this year, the SAARC secretary general, Mr. Ibrahim Hussain Zaki, signed a memorandum with Japan for the establishment of the SAARC-Japan Special Fund. The Government of Japan has pledged a contribution of three lakh U.S. dollars for the current year for selective SAARC activities and exchange of intellectuals between SAARC member countries and Japan. The United Nations agency UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development] and SAARC have also entered into an agreement regarding data base on trade control measures. The informal contact with ASEAN established by the SAARC is now showing some positive results and the council of ministers meeting in Dhaka held on the 4th and 5th of this month authorized its current chairman and Bangladesh foreign minister to further explore the possibility of active collaboration between the two regional organizations. He has also been mandated to pursue consultations with the European Community to identify beneficial areas of cooperation.

Furthermore, SAARC has established contacts with the World Bank for assistance in the core area of poverty alleviation. A workshop was organized in Washington in October last where the report of the independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation headed by the former Nepalese prime minister, Mr. Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, was discussed. The workshop generated quite a lot of interest and was attended by the vice president and senior officials of the World Bank; representatives from UNICEF; the United Nations Development Program, UNDP; IMF; and the Asian Development Bank. Several areas were identified for further research and action. Mr. Ibrahim Hussain Zaki, who is completing a very successful two-year tenure this month's end as SAARC secretary general also disclosed during an informal meeting that the UNDP has proposed to undertake cooperation programs for poverty alleviation in South Asia in collaboration with SAARC.

President Rao Addresses Defense Committee

BK1012161893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, has said that though various efforts are being made to effect economy in expenditure, these will no way affect the Army's operational preparedness. He was addressing the members of the Defense Parliamentary Consultative Committee in New Delhi. The members were informed that in the fields of missiles, aircraft, and tank technologies, the country's performance is comparable to the best in the world.

Finance Minister Discusses Economic Reforms

BK1412050493 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] The finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has said that the aim of the economic reforms is to remove various bottlenecks coming in the way of accelerated development of the economy. In a prebudget discussion with representatives of the industry in New Delhi today, he said the reforms are designed to strengthen the industry. He said if India is to play a worthwhile role in global terms, our economy must grow at the rate of seven to eight percent per annum. The modern industry has to be the pacesetter. Dr. Manmohan Singh said while the response of industry and trade to certain measures taken by the government has been very positive, the process of recovery from the industrial recession which set in in 1991-92 has been slow. This remains a cause of serious concern.

41 Foreign Investment Proposals Approved

BK1412040293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] The government has approved 41 proposals envisaging direct foreign investment of about 150 crore rupees. The proposals cleared by the empowered committee have projected export earnings of over 1,600 crore rupees in five year's time. With this, the committee has cleared proposals of foreign direct investment of 3,750 crore rupees since its inception.

Iran

Raja'i-Khorasani Interviewed on Ties With U.S.

NC1012211193 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 29 Nov 93 p 11

[Interview with Tehran Majles Deputy Sa'id Raja'i-Khorasani by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[Text] We met him in a side hall in the Majles building. Raja'i-Khorasani wanted to explain and emphasize his position, although he is committed to the leader's decision rejecting any contact with the "great Satan".

He spoke Arabic because he studied in Beirut. He also spoke clear English. But when it came to serious issues, he spoke only in Persian, and through a translator. We asked him jokingly: Have you completed the reconciliation with the United States? He quickly answered: The reconciliation has not started.

[AL-SAFIR] You have your own views on this issue.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] Yes. I wrote a letter to the leader of the revolution some time ago. It was discussed in the press and created a furor in the country. It was an internal issue and was not proposed to the United States.

[AL-SAFIR] It is true that it was not proposed to the United States, but many in Iran have the same view.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] This might be true, but any opinion presented by the experts must be approved by his eminence the leader to become valid. This is a purely legislative matter. We have a criterion for legislation in this country. We present proposals, but they must be approved by the leader to become valid. We made proposals, but his eminence did not approve of our proposals.

[AL-SAFIR] Indeed, his position was harsh. He ridiculed such a call.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] Yes, indeed.

[AL-SAFIR] But it was clear from the discussion in the newspapers that you were not alone.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] I might not be the only one who holds these views, but I was the one responsible for the contents of the letter. I did not consult with anyone. I accept your statement that others inside and outside the Majles believe in my viewpoint, but they all know that this needs the approval of his eminence.

[AL-SAFIR] It was said that you reflected the implicit positions of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. Is this true?

[Raja'i-Khorasani] Some said so because I was previously the head of the Majles Foreign Affairs Committee. They have sometimes considered my views to be identical with or representative of those of the government. However, I am not in that position now. Some still believe that my views are coordinated with the government, which is not true. What I proposed was my personal view. I once argued for expanding relations with Egypt, and that was a personal view. The government did not approve of it. The same applies to the proposals I made in the third term of the Majles concerning South Africa.

Observers believe that the government, as an official authority, cannot express its viewpoint and that the Majles is the body that does this, but this is not true. My letter was not coordinated with the government. The government did not know about it. I sent several copies to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the Majles speaker, and the foreign minister to let them know about it. Maybe some government members supported the idea, but that was not the opinion of the government, nor was I representing it.

[AL-SAFIR] The topics dealt with relations with the United States, South Africa, and Egypt. Only Israel was excluded.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] As regards South Africa, we were against the policy of apartheid. If apartheid is eliminated, we change our position. I believe that South Africa under de Klerk is not the old South Africa. I believed that the sooner we changed our position, the better we served our interests in that country. But the government found no interests there. With regard to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United States, I present my views as an expert. If I did not do this, I would be violating the shari'ah. It is my Islamic duty to offer my views.

I believe my proposals and analyses do not concede the principles of the Islamic revolution. With regard to Israel, this would be considered a concession from an Islamic point of view. There is a difference. The United States is a legitimate country, but Israel is a military base imposed on the Palestinians. It is an occupation, not a legitimate state.

[AL-SAFIR] This argument might lead you to support the Gaza-Jericho accord, if we apply the case of the whites and blacks in South Africa.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] I am not talking about understanding. Racial policy has ended in South Africa. Therefore, the reason for severing relations has been removed, and we will have to reconsider our stand.

When we talk about Israel, we do not mean understanding. We are talking about occupation. Israel's very existence is occupation, which will not end without the end of Israel itself.

[AL-SAFIR] What if an agreement is reached?

[Raja'i-Khorasani] There are sacred places in the Palestinian territories that do not belong only to them. Every Muslim has the right to be interested in them and to engage in jihad to liberate them.

[AL-SAFIR] In your political thesis and demand for changes in Iran's policy, you are seeking to promote Iran's interests.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] Of course, because I believe that our international relations should be developed to prove our point of view to the nations of the world. Relations are necessary to convey views. There are numerous international programs and development projects, none of which seek Iran's interest. So what do you mean by the word "interest"?

[AL-SAFIR] I mean a national interest, not a private interest.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] As is the case when you write a book and make coordinated, consecutive chapters, we cannot separate the foreign and domestic policies.

[AL-SAFIR] The foreign policy serves the domestic situation.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] Very much so. In foreign relations, I believe we should broaden our relations with both the West and East, especially in the Islamic world. With regard to domestic policy, we should draw up a plan for economic, political, and social development. Domestically, we have begun a new system and policy based on a fixed currency and a free market. This entails additional political programs. The political programs should be in line with the economic programs. Becoming a large, productive country with a large private sector will require marketing. Thus, we will have to be present worldwide and have a share of the global economy, and this is what has to be established domestically.

[AL-SAFIR] Then the foreign policy must be amended.

[Raja'i-Khorasani] An amendment must be made within the context of existing principles. There is no dispute between us and most of the countries of the world, and we must see to it that we do not have disputes with the Islamic countries.

If we are to establish ties and adopt principled stands, we have to establish relations with the West and the East that do not seem to contradict other stands. Cooperation with the world in various fields is not something new. Since the triumph of the revolution, we have been trying to coordinate our ties with other countries. Certain problems with some countries have been resolved, and some have remained. We have had economic ties with France since day one. We had problems with France, but they were removed. New problems have now been created, however.

We sought to expand relations with African countries, particularly the Islamic countries, and with Asian countries, but the war problems that faced us impaired our efforts to develop ties with everyone. I believe there has been no fundamental transition, and we have never wanted a closed foreign policy. Now that the war is over and with the start of the development and production phase, an open foreign policy is convenient.

When Clinton came to power, he claimed he would introduce a new economic policy. But he has not changed Bush's foreign policy. I believe that the United States' interests in the region complement Israel's interests. Of course, you know about the Jews' influence in the United States, and Clinton says that what their views must be taken into consideration.

You know the situations in Egypt and North Africa better than I do. There are unpleasant signs that the Arab countries are easily accepting the existing situation. News from Jordan indicates that the matter is not so easy, and I truly hope that we will pass through this the dark phase. In principle, there is no alternative to cultural and economic cooperation among the Islamic countries.

Seyyed Hadi Khamene'i on Ties With U.S.

NC1212112093 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 17 Nov 93 pp 2,4

["Exclusive" interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Hadi Khamene'i, proprietor of JAHAN-E ESLAM, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [JAHAN-E ESLAM] Your Excellency is aware that one of the major topics of discussion in our country these days is the issue of our struggle against the United States, on one hand, and of our strategy and approach to talks and compromise with the United States, on the other. Our question is: Why does Your Excellency reject compromise or talks with the United States in any form? What theories are there in our country on this, and which of these theories do you support?

[Khamene'i] In the name of God the almighty, we can look at the United States from two perspectives. As a revolutionary country, we cannot have healthy relations with it from either perspective.

First, when regarded within the context of the past 40 years of our country's history, the United States is the country that exercised the most oppression, corruption, and colonialist attitude toward us since the domination by the British. [passage omitted]

Therefore, we have a firm and strong reason to believe that as long as Iran is not compensated for the plundering of its wealth and resources, we—as a country that the United States owes so much—cannot have logical or healthy relations with it.

Second, the United States, as a superpower that claims world leadership, is the only country that is a "symbol of colonialism" in the world. Relations with the United States, as well as lowering our tone against it, would mean that we wanted to make up with colonialism and all the colonialists of the world.

In other words, if we establish relations with the United States, we will not be able to avoid friendly relations with Israel's Zionist regime, with South Africa, and with other bullying countries in the world. Of course, we have ordinary and toned-down political and official relations with many countries, apart from the South African regime and the regime occupying Jerusalem.

But we should consider the fact that if we establish relations with the United States, it will mean that we have ceased to regard the exploitation of oppressed masses as an ugly phenomenon.

In other words, we will be unable to disapprove of the oppression that is being exercised every day by one of the illegitimate children of the United States—that is, Israel—against our Palestinian brothers and sisters.

It will also mean that we will have to justify and forget the plundering and pillaging that is perpetrated by the United States every day and every hour—like the crimes that are now being jointly perpetrated with Europe in Somalia, as well as the various plots that the United States hatches in Central Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and many other places—and the treason and the crimes that it has perpetrated against us since the Islamic revolution. With regard to the U.S. plots after the revolution, as far as the treachery against Iran since the revolution is concerned, I must say that the main reason behind Iraq's imposed war and the economic sanctions on Iran is the White House leadership.

The Americans are still trying to create severe economic problems for us. While resorting to false political propaganda against us, they are engaged in a cultural onslaught against us and—as stated by the imam, may his soul be sanctified—all our ills stem from America and all our cries should be against America.

What the imam meant was that we should use all our resources and all our strength against the United States.

This is because if we are able to crush the United States and take a revolutionary approach to it, we will be able to wage a just struggle against the other manifestations of colonialism and arrogance in the world. And this befits a revolution like the Islamic revolution of Iran, the initial and basic motives of which are Koranic and were repeatedly stated by His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified. This course was charted by the imam in this century. Therefore, acting against it is actually tantamount to recalcitrance against all the experiences and efforts of the past years for which thousands of our martyrs have shed blood and hundreds of thousands have been wounded.

[JAHAN-E ESLAM] What is the revolution's stance on this?

[Khamene'i] The view that I have expressed is precisely the view of the leader of the revolution, His Eminence Imam Khomeyni—may his soul be sanctified—and is the main spirit of the revolution. In other words, the revolution has never and will never accept any thought or inclination other than this. But unfortunately, there are some nonrevolutionary inclinations that have deviated from the main line of the revolution and have been active in the country for some years now. These inclinations were initially weak and in the minority. But with the passage of time and the normalization of the atmosphere for propounding such issues, which are alien to the revolution, the slogans are being heard are the same slogans that the imam repeatedly slammed.

One of these slogans is the need for relations with the United States. But of course, this issue was not propounded all at once. It started in the form of the question: Can we or can we not have relations with the United States? Then, after some time, they prepared the atmosphere to do away with the indecency of the issue and to ask the question: Is it not better to consider relations with the United States? Later, we even heard some of the country's officials—that is, the vice president—say: We should, at any rate, have relations, and we do have relations. Therefore, we should make these relations direct and official and bring them out into the open.

Unfortunately this idea was not confronted as it should have been. I must explain here that what I mean by confronting the idea is not confronting the person who uttered this idea. The person who uttered this idea does not merit pressures and strong approaches. But we should have definitely confronted this idea, which was uttered in a calculated manner by an official. We should have displayed a calculated approach so that the grounds for repeating such remarks in society would not have been created.

The fact that this issue was uttered by an official showed that the necessary grounds were being prepared and that what was said was not accidental.

Unfortunately, reaction to this was extremely weak and shallow. And now, two years since those words were uttered, we see the same idea being uttered in a much more overt and extensive way, and we see a person wearing the garb of a Majles deputy address the leader and admonish the leader about the need for relations with the United States.

It seems that the person who uttered these remarks wanted to prove that his intentions were good, since his letter was not open and he only wanted to convey his expert views to the leader. Even though this letter was secret, we all see how its contents have been revealed. (As for how they were revealed, it is not our duty to investigate. He himself should investigate and find out how. Also, the outcome of the contents of this letter—irrespective of who stated them and what elements influenced him to do so—is important. The outcome was that, once again, relations with the United States were propounded on a broader scale and in a worse and more impudent way. And, as the leader of the revolution also pointed out, this was an attempt to wipe out the indecency of such issues, in the same way that when a crime or sin is talked about extensively, its ugliness begins to fade. This line exists in our society today, and it appears to be active. Without wanting to accuse a specific group or faction, apparently this "line" has been strong enough to find its way into the Majles.

Therefore, the question that arises is: How has this line been able to acquire strength when one of the most powerful, most revolutionary, and most reputable factions in the country was barred, through various ploys, from entering the Majles, and how has this group been able to enter the Majles?!

[JAHAN-E ESLAM] Was this group at the center of the activities and efforts for their own entry into the Majles and for barring the radical and pro-imam line from the Majles?

The most optimistic view and the probable one is that this group resorted to various methods to fool the winning faction in the elections by feigning a concordance of views with this faction and thus finding its way into the Majles. This is the least that we can say. But it is also very regrettable that this faction, with all its allegations and, unfortunately, with all the extensive capabilities at its disposal, has resorted to an extensive purge of the opposing faction any time it has had the opportunity to do so but has lacked the power to purge a pro-American faction among it. It is regrettable that this Americanophile [preceding word in English] faction that is entertaining thoughts of relations with the United States continues to be present. It may be that it is present without the knowledge of the said faction. This group's presence is extremely strong today, and it believes that we should commence unconditional relations with the United States.

This group believes that the severing of relations with the United States was detrimental to our country from the security, military, economic, and political aspects! Because I do not want to convey this group's aphorisms, policies, and culture, I will make only general references.

This group believes that we need relations in all areas and that if we establish such relations, our problems will be completely solved. However, they ignore or do not want to admit the fact that we had a broader level of relations with the United States during the shah's regime.

Although relations at that time appeared to be very friendly, our wealth was plundered. Our country's resources were pillaged. Our policy at that time was extremely humiliating, and our economy was extremely dependent and nonexistent.

Therefore, how is it possible for the United States to establish relations now with a system that they detest and have rejected—that is, the system of the Islamic Republic—and for these relations to be so friendly that our interests will be considered completely?

If anyone seriously expresses this idea, it will show that he is not acquainted with the United States at all. The

United States is a superpower and a colonialist government, and relations between a colonialist and another country are based on ensuring the colonialist's interests. In such relations, it is impossible for the colonialist to grant anything unless his own interests are completely guaranteed.

This is one viewpoint.

Of course, there is another viewpoint in this country that says that these relations should be accepted, but with many conditions attached.

The second group has many differences with the first group, and there are many people with good views among them. But in general, the views of this group are also wrong, in our opinion. Not because we want to say that, when these conditions are met, the situation that prevails today will continue, but because these conditions will not be accepted by the United States. Therefore, the only thing that will be achieved will be the lessening of the indecency and ugliness of relations with the United States.

Actually, those who make such remarks might be unaware of what they are saying, and they might be the ones who also support an unconditional severing of ties and who believe that talking about conditions can clarify a thing or two or change things. But this is not so. We who follow the imam's line believe that the United States can never come to its senses and that if the United States does change its ways someday, it will no longer be the United States. It will be like any ordinary country and, naturally, will not have the economic and industrial growth that it has now because the United States' economic and industrial growth is not the outcome of good planning but the outcome of policies that are aimed at exploiting the resources of others.

In the field of advanced weaponry, for example, if they can increase their gross national product and their national income, it is at the cost of wars and bloodshed among weaker countries because of the arms they are buying. The arms purchases help the U.S. economy flourish and big capitalists to continue to exist. You can see, therefore, that if the United States does not go around plundering the wealth of others, it cannot continue to exist.

Thus, among these three views that exist in our society, the imam supports the unconditional severing of relations with the United States.

[JAHAN-E ESLAMI] In Your Excellency's remarks, you referred to the establishment of some kind of relations, saying that if the United States unfreezes our assets and compensates for what it has done to our nation, there is a possibility for talks. Our question is: Is this a condition, as such? Or do you mean the condition that, when met, the United States is no longer the United States?

[Khamene'i] No, this is not a condition. I did not mention any conditions. I was referring to two issues to illustrate the despicableness of the United States, and I said that as long as the United States is unable to settle the accounts that it has with us, which date back 40 to 50 years, how can matters be settled through mere talks or through the exchange of a few words?

I was not setting conditions at all. What I wanted to do was make a reference to the voluminous history of our differences with the United States, which cannot be summed up in a few months or a few years. If we want to start with the latest U.S. action, we can refer to the imposed war, which cost us billions of dollars, according to facts and figures. (Apart from this, we also experienced significant human losses). If we start at this point, then we can see that the United States actually owes us billions of dollars.

Of course, this does not "negate Iraq's debt." But if we look at the causes of the issue, we will see that the United States also owes us because it caused the destruction of our assets and our cities.

Start from there and work backward.

You will see that our assets have been frozen, that the Iranian nation was defrauded in large transactions during the shah's regime and in the sale of war materiel and facilities, as well as in the transactions between U.S. companies and individuals, on one side, and our country, on the other.

These relations were always established on a unilateral basis, with a one-sided exploitation of our national wealth. Big U.S. entrepreneurs and capitalists came to Iran and set up bases here. Their hirelings fled after the revolution and after they had plundered billions of tumans of our money and deposited them in their bank accounts. These are actually the things that the United States owes us.

This is not a small figure. If the Americans agree to return this amount to Iran, they will have to live on bread and water for years on end and ask the U.S. citizens to give up all their luxuries to repay this debt.

The United States should give up its income for years to repay its debts to Iran. Of course, the United States owes similar amounts to other countries.

Therefore, what I want to say is that there is a long way to go and that it might even be impossible to tread this long path, unless America's ruling system changes radically.

There are definitely those in the United States who want their government to do away with its colonialist policy. And if the current leaders who represent the capitalist minority and the Zionists step aside and allow the oppressed American nation to come into power, then the United States might become an acceptable country.

[JAHAN-E ESLAMI] Your Excellency is aware that our Interior Ministry recently prevented a march by the Unity Consolidation Bureau. Of course, the Interior

Ministry announced that it will issue a statement on this, but it has not issued a statement yet.

As a political personality in this country, how do you assess the Interior Ministry's action?

[Khamene'i] The Interior Ministry, which is in charge of the country's domestic policy, is usually able to direct the general regulations of society on the basis of the Constitution, as well as on the basis of genuine demands and the spirit of the Islamic revolution, and can act to safeguard all values.

At any rate, the Interior Ministry should be able to create a balance among groups with differing inclinations.

Prior to this incident, we had various ministers in the Interior Ministry, each of whom acted according to his own views.

One of the individuals who had radical thoughts is Mr. Mohtashemi. The rest of the ministers were from other groups and factions.

At the same time, all of them agreed that actions in a revolutionary society should always be geared toward preserving the spirit of the revolution. Each year on 4 November [the anniversary of the occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran], all the interested and pro-revolutionary groups—irrespective of their faction—have an opportunity to play a part, particularly because the occupation of the den of espionage was attributed to the students who followed the imam's line and who are now acting under the name of Islamic societies. They were granted the necessary opportunity to plan ways to celebrate this anniversary. This rule has been violated for the last couple of years, but it should not have been violated. [passage omitted]

Unfortunately, one of the individuals who is among those who believe in relations with the United States has invited to speak at the ceremony for the last couple of years. Such acts inflict a blow on anti-American beliefs. Even though the crowd at such gatherings hears the speaker use anti-American words, they are aware of the speaker's true beliefs! [passage omitted]

The action this year by the interior minister was extremely unfavorable because it laid a dangerous foundation for the future and set an unfavorable precedent in the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In this Islamic country, a group of students—a large and extensive gathering of the Islamic student societies—plus thousands of other people who believe in severing relations with the United States decided to organize an independent ceremony and an independent march. The Interior Ministry unilaterally decided not to allow them to march, but allowed the other side to do so. [passage omitted]

The best thing that the Interior Ministry can do now is to courageously criticize its behavior and to give an explanation and not try to justify its actions.

[JAHAN-E ESLAM] Your Excellency witnessed how, during this year's [4 November] ceremonies, the esteemed leader met with students on the morning of 3 November and expressed extremely decisive, clear, and explicit views about the approach to the United States.

[Khamene'i] His remarks encouraged the students to follow the imam's line and actually confronted the elements that seek to depoliticize society. [passage omitted]

Commentaries Criticize Rushdie-Clinton Meeting

Meeting Declared 'Scandal'

NC1012200193 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 27 Nov 93 p 15

[Unattributed commentary: "The Latest White House Scandal"]

[Text] U.S. State Department officials have said that Rushdie's meeting with Clinton and other U.S. political figures is a political message to the Islamic Republic of Iran! In the United States, Rushdie had talks with the President, the secretary of state, and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake.

Prior to these meetings, the United States had refrained from accepting Rushdie. Only the Europeans had supported this progeny of the British under the guise of upholding freedom of expression.

Initially, the European heads of government adopted a half-baked and juvenile decision under the influence of the British Government's motivation and suspended relations with Iran. They later realized what a great act of folly they had committed under the influence of the cunning British policies! They had ignored their own interests and relations with Iran for the sake of an accursed and unfortunate individual and had incurred the contempt of the world's Muslims!

Before long, the EC realized that it had been duped by the British, and, with its head hanging in shame, it sought to resume relations with Iran.

London's attitude in deceiving the EC was quite interesting. Ostensibly the British Government opposed the European Union but continued to encourage the Western leaders to submit to its leanings for the sake of the acceptance of the principle of union!

Thus, we perceive that none of the European leaders could create any disruption with regard to the historical edict of Imam Khomeyni—may God's blessings be upon him—and it is certain that the United States cannot change the imminent destiny of Salman Rushdie. The State Department spokesman has described the threat to kill Rushdie as a threat to human rights.

Despite the fact that the U.S. echelons strove to convey the impression that support for Rushdie has no connection with their campaign against Islam, why didn't they explain the reason for their opposition to Islamic injunctions and the fact that they are supporting an individual who has insulted the sanctities of all the Muslims of the world?!

The black human rights dossier of the U.S. Government, whether at home or in all the countries of the world, is a long story that would fill reams of paper and that everyone is aware of. It does not need to be repeated. However, the interesting thing about the meeting between Rushdie and the White House's national security adviser is that it indicates that support for someone who has insulted Islamic sanctities is linked to U.S. national security!

The question that arises is: From among all the freedoms that the governments and nations of the world should enjoy, why do the Westerners only insist on freedom of expression and to such an extent? The answer is clear. A large section of the world's mass media is at their disposal, and they feed them whatever they want to. What they do not want them to have, they censor in the name of freedom of the press.

If this situation changes someday, the world will discover that these very civilized Westerners send people to the gallows for their beliefs, just as they have directly or indirectly embarked on the genocide of the Bosnian Muslims and are not willing to tolerate a few Muslim girls who don headscarves in keeping with their beliefs!

'Confrontation' Against Muslims Viewed

NC1012195093 Tehran SALAM in Persian 28 Nov 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "The Minor Satan's Meeting With the Arch-Satan"]

[Excerpts] Despite the end of the Cold War and the U.S. domestic economic problems, which resulted in the return of the Democrats to the seat of power after being forced to stay at home for 12 years, the lack of a clear foreign policy strategy to replace the "influence barrier" or "deterrence" doctrine [preceding word in English] of the Cold War forced them to pursue the same doctrine. [passage omitted]

However, is it possible that the substitution of "Islam" for "communism" and the notion of "war of civilizations" can become the cornerstone of the United States' new international strategy and save the White House echelons from perplexity and confusion? Can it keep them out of regional pitfalls? The answer is decisively and categorically no. If the U.S. policymakers do not take steps to formulate a new strategy that is tailored to the new international circumstances and realities of the world, they will be the ultimate losers in the last decade of the 20th century.

The conduct of the U.S. Democratic hierarchy has been revamped according to the same Cold-War-era strategy that, since they have come to power, indicates confrontation and imbroglio with Muslims. [passage omitted]

The U.S. and Western echelons, who have resorted to slogans such as democracy, human rights, freedom of thought, and so on, justify their support and their meeting with an individual like Rushdie when Rushdie's action should be condemned and rejected. Whoever acts as Rushdie did is decreed to be sentenced to death.

In order to understand this reality, it is sufficient to allude to the unified reaction of the Muslims with regard to Rushdie and the fact that all the countries that are members of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] unanimously endorsed the decree by His Eminence Imam Khomeyni (may God be pleased with him) that called for the death sentence for Rushdie. This was one of those rare occasions when such a consensus was observed.

Now if the U.S. politicians imagine that by convening such a meeting they have pitted themselves only against Iran, they are experiencing a major delusion. Rushdie's action has wounded the hearts and souls of all the Muslims of the world, and any kind of meeting with this apostate individual and support accorded to him will be construed as a confrontation against all the Muslims of the world. It is clear that this will have negative consequences for the future of the Muslims' relations with the West.

More than ever, the Muslims of today have realized that their ideological values and religious identity are being attacked by "Western civilization," and they are defending their "theological culture" and "Islamic civilization" with all their being. If there had been any Muslims who had any real doubts about this decree when it was promulgated by Imam Khomeyni and who might have interpreted Rushdie's action as mere adventurism and not as a plot, the consistent and consecutive support of the Western governments and officials has confirmed that Rushdie's action was indeed a calculated plot in this "war of civilizations."

Unfortunately, some Western writers and thinkers have also become trapped in this plot and are defending Rushdie in the name of "freedom of thought" in conjunction with Western officials. Wouldn't it have been preferable if the Western writers and thinkers had—instead of such defense—questioned the validity of the sum total of Western thought and values and why they should be considered all-encompassing for the entire world?

They should realize that cultures and civilizations have their own criteria of values, and they should not pass judgment on the basis of their own values and standards. [passage omitted]

Most Western journalists travel to other parts of the world, but they are unable to comprehend how the West can be considered anything but generous and friendly. Television viewers in the West gloat gleefully when they see cruise missiles attacking Baghdad, but viewers in other parts of the world see that the West hastens to chastise the Iraqis and Somalis, who are not white, but do not do anything to the white-skinned Serbs. Such actions are dangerous by all criteria.

It is amazing that, despite all this dread and all these misconceptions the West has with regard to Islam, it appears that the West is deliberately moving on the path of antagonizing the Islamic world. [passage omitted]

The actions by Clinton and other U.S. officials are overt examples of attacks and "confrontations against the Muslims" with their support of the apostate Rushdie. Disguised as "support for freedom of thought and expression," they are contemplating a "new Crusade." Thus, the Muslims should prepare themselves for a greater confrontation than ever before.

Hamas Official on Visit, PLO-Israeli Accord

NC1112184093 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 Dec 93 p 14

[Interview with Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the Political Bureau of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[Text] Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the political bureau of the Islamic Resistance Movement—Hamas, visited the Islamic Republic of Iran last week as the head of a delegation and held talks with high-ranking Iranian officials. In an interview with JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, he answered questions about the Gaza-Jericho accord, recent incidents in the occupied territories, the withdrawal of Zionist forces from Gaza and Jericho, Christopher's trip to the region, Syrian-Israeli and Jordanian-Israeli talks, the recent parliamentary elections in Jordan, and the Islamic Republic of Iran's stance on the Palestinian problem. It should be noted that Dr. Musa Abu- Marzuq was born in Gaza in 1951 and has a doctorate in industrial engineering.

The following are the questions and answers:

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Several significant incidents have taken place in the occupied territories in the last few days, and the martyrdom of the 'Izz-al-Din Qassam commander affiliated with the Hamas movement intensified the clashes between Muslim Palestinians and Zionist forces. Hamas has claimed responsibility for killing a Jewish woman and wounding several others. Please tell us how you assess these incidents and how you see the future.

[Abu-Marzuq] Our struggles will continue until Palestine is liberated. The recent incidents have no effect on this struggle. Our jihad continues. The recent incidents, especially the martyrdom of 'Imad 'Aql, commander of the 'Izz-al-Din Qassam group, shows that the battle has led to losses for us and for the enemy. Martyr 'Imam 'Aql was enamored with martyrdom, and he achieved his wish. He was martyred while praying. A movement that offers people like Yasin Mamluki and 'Imad 'Aql can also offer other people to society. He will not be the last martyr. He was only one of the martyrs in the path of Islam.

As for the recent developments, I should say that we predicted incidents like these because the Gaza-Jericho accord does not fulfill the objectives and wishes of the Palestinian nation. We believe that the Palestinian nation will rise once again. Even Fatah members who agreed to the signing of the accord will rise and join the others, and the situation will return to what it was before. To a certain extent, this prediction has materialized. All the combatant elements have united and have resisted the enemy. We hope that this accord will not last, that unity will be achieved among all the mujahidin, and that the plan to liberate Palestine will materialize.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Recently, Yasir 'Arafat said that the PLO-Israeli talks have reached an impasse. Some Israeli officials believe that the army fomented the recent clashes. Which of these two views do you support?

[Abu-Marzuq] Yasir 'Arafat says one thing and does another. He says that we are close to gaining Jerusalem, but he completely forgets Jerusalem in his talks. 'Arafat, who has recognized Israel's borders and has signed the accord, still does not know where the borders that are acceptable to the Zionists are. The people have lost their trust in him. Therefore, we cannot rely on his words. He shouts that Syria wants to sign a separate accord with Israel, but he was the first to sign a separate accord with Israel. 'Arafat is aiming at another objective with his remarks. The enemy is the same enemy, and someone who implements the enemy's plans is himself an enemy.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] It seems that the Gaza-Jericho accord is being threatened. Is this what you think as well?

[Abu-Marzuq] Yes. This accord engulfs explosive elements because it is not an accord, it is a transaction. The accord does not solve any of the existing problems, such as the problem of the refugees, deportees, Jerusalem, the settlers, domestic security, roads, borders, the economy, or water. All these problems remain unsolved. The accord postpones all the problems until conditions are ripe. We believe that this accord will not last. Time will prove this. We have seen that it did not take more than two months for conditions to change. Differences arose, and the talks reached an impasse. I believe that the accord cannot be implemented because it has many explosive features.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] According to the Gaza-Jericho accord, Zionist forces should withdraw from Gaza and Jericho by 13 December. But the Zionist regime recently stated that its forces will not be completely withdrawn from these two towns. Why have the Zionists not carried out their commitment to 'Arafat?

[Abu-Marzuq] I do not think that all the Israeli forces will be withdrawn from Gaza. The accord does not stress the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Jewish settlements because it emphasizes the existence of these settlements. The accord has many vague points, such as the withdrawal issue. The withdrawal of the Israeli forces is stressed in the Hebrew text of the accord, but the Arabic text stresses the withdrawal of all the Israeli forces. Both texts refer to the continuation of the settlements and to the fact that the Israeli army will safeguard these settlements. The issue has not been clarified. How can the settlements remain and the Israeli forces withdraw? These two texts are not clear. There are various points in the accord that show that the Israeli forces will not withdraw easily. Rabin has said that 13 December, which is the deadline for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Gaza and Jericho, is not definite and that it is he who will decide when the Israeli forces should withdraw. Therefore, I predict that only a limited number of Israeli forces will be withdrawn on the set date.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What did 'Arafat gain by signing the Gaza-Jericho accord?

[Abu-Marzuq] 'Arafat gained things that did not benefit the Palestinian nation. 'Arafat dismissed the Palestinian negotiating delegation even though it was expected that the members of this delegation would undertake the responsibility for the self-rule in the occupied territories. He was able to gain U.S., Western, and Israeli support for himself. The facts show that the Palestinian nation existed long before this accord was signed and before the formation of the PLO, and this nation continues its steadfast presence.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Warren Christopher is scheduled to visit the Middle East and instill new life into the compromise process in the region. Can U.S. pressure lead to the implementation of the accord?

[Abu-Marzuq] The issue is more complicated than Mr. Christopher thinks. The Golan, Lebanon, Jerusalem and other regional problems are complicated, and the signing of the accord has made them more complicated. I do not think that Mr. Christopher will be able to fulfill any of his dreams. This problem requires a radical solution, and this radical solution will not be easy to come by.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Syria is participating in the compromise talks, and both Syria and the Zionist regime are putting forth demands in order to achieve so-called peace. Will Syria reach an agreement with Israel in the near future?

[Abu-Marzuq] The Syrians participated in the talks on the basis of the principle of land for peace and on the basis of Resolution 242, which we reject. But Syria considers peace to be achievable in exchange for the return of the Golan Heights. If the Israelis agree to withdraw completely from the Golan Heights, an agreement will be signed between Syria and Israel. But if Israel does not accept this condition, this agreement will not be signed. Syria is currently in a good economic situation. And, on this basis, it can demand its full rights, even though we believe that these rights should also include the Palestinians because the main issue is Palestine and not the Golan.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Jordan and Israel have held secret talks, and it seems that an agreement between the two is imminent. What is your opinion?

[Abu-Marzuq] You know that Jordan and the PLO participated in the talks with a common delegation. If these two delegations are holding separate talks with Israel, we know that one of them is facing a problem with Israel. I believe that there is no Jordanian-Israeli problem. The main problem is the Palestinian-Israeli one. When the West Bank was united with the East Bank, it fell into the hands of the Israelis. Therefore, the current issue is the problem of the Palestinians, who were expelled from their homes.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] You know that in the recent elections in Jordan, supporters of the regime gained the most seats in parliament and a smaller number of seats went to the Islamic groups, compared with the 1989 elections. Why do you think the Islamic groups failed in these elections and were unable to score a spectacular victory?

[Abu-Marzuq] I think that there are many reasons for this. First of all, the approval of the new election law helped break up the Muslims. But if we look at the reality of the outcome of these elections, we see that Muslims gained 18 out of a total of 80 seats, while in past elections they have gained 22 seats. The votes that the Muslims received in the elections show that they did not fail. They continue to be a strong force on the Jordanian scene. The Muslims constitute Jordan's strongest political group. The Muslims gained 18 seats, while other political parties gained only eight seats.

If the Muslims had studied Jordan's election law better, they could have utilized their forces correctly and achieved a better outcome. In short, the Muslims' popularity in Jordan has not decreased, and the Muslims have been able to strengthen their position.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Please tell us what the objective behind your visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran is and which officials you have met so far.

[Abu-Marzuq] This is the first visit by a Hamas delegation to Iran since the Gaza-Jericho accord was signed. The objective behind this visit is to convey the movement's views on this accord to officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and also to give the Iranian officials news about our brothers in the occupied territories.

During this visit, we have met and held talks with the leader of the revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i; President Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri; Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati; Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati; and several other officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] How do you assess the Islamic Republic's stance on the Palestinian revolution and on the recent developments in occupied Palestine?

[Abu-Marzuq] The Iranian officials' stance on the Palestine problem is a principled stance that emanates from stable principles. This stance has not changed, despite the pressures inflicted on the Islamic Republic of Iran, and all the officials have a common stance on the Palestinian revolution.

Delegation Protests Israeli Credentials at UNIDO

LD1012174793 Tehran IRNA in English 1219 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Vienna, Dec. 10, IRNA—The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran in a letter to the conference chairman, and UNIDO's credentials committee, lodged a strong protest on the credentials of Israel at the fifth United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) general conference in Yaounde on Thursday.

The conference, at its finishing stages (6-10 Dec), deliberated today on the final resolution and credentials.

The letter said that the occupying regime has systematically and grossly violated the most elemental human rights of the Palestinian people and employed terrorism in all its forms as an official policy.

In our view, the letter continued, drawing up unrealistic, short-sighted and imposed plans and signing illigitimate accord on behalf of the Palestinian people, could never return peace and stability to the region.

For the above reasons and in the line with the position of the government of the I.R. [Islamic Republic of] Iran on the issue, my delegation wishes to disassociate itself from the credentials of Israel, said the letter.

The Iranian delegation also requested that the position of Iran be reflected in the report of the credentials committee and considered as an official document annexed to the report.

The letter of protest is to be attached, as a separate official document, to the credentials' committee report, according to the head of Iranian delegation, Mojtaba Arastou.

Commentary Urges Negotiations in Afghanistan

NC1212084893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Commentary by News Commentaries Group]

[Text] As you have heard in the news, Afghan Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar has delegated his official powers to Qazi Amin Waqqad, who is his deputy and a member of the Hezb-e Eslami. According to news agencies, Borhanoddin Rabbani, the Afghanistan president has endorsed this move.

It has not yet been explained why Hekmatyar resorted to this unexpected action. He recently proposed that the president and the prime minister should resign and a neutral interim government should take over the reins of the country's government. He believes that the sole solution to Afghanistan's political problems is holding elections.

On the other hand, Hekmatyar stated in an earlier interview that he had not been able to begin work as prime minister because of the prevailing obstructionism and that Afghanistan's political problems have become even more acute. Based on these suppositions, political analysts believe that Hekmatyar may have stepped aside for two reasons: One is dissatisfaction with the current situation, and the second is the complicated state of administrative affairs.

What has elicited the apprehension in political circles is that Hekmatyar's resignation might herald a new chapter in Afghanistan's imbroglio. Earlier reports have stated that hostile forces in Afghanistan are reinforcing their positions to change the current course of war to their advantage. If these reports are accurate, one can expect bloodier battles that do not attain any results for Afghanistan and that only threaten the Afghan nation.

The Afghan jehadi leaders should not neglect the fact that 18 months of war and bloodshed have not yielded any gains. War is not the key to problem. Negotiations and political solutions are the only appropriate means for terminating the war and resolving the differences in Afghanistan.

All the jehadi groups have played a role in defeating the communists and, therefore, should share in the formation of a government. An equitable distribution of power, with the participation of all the groups and factions and keeping the national interests of Afghanistan in view, is the most important issues and should be accorded a great deal of attention.

KEYHAN Views Future of 'Arab-Afghans'

NC1312124093 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 1 Dec 93 p 16

[Ya'qub Tavakkoli commentary: "In the Margin of Borhanoddin Rabbani's Utterances in Egypt"]

[Text] The Egyptian news agency [not further indentified] announced: "Borhanoddin Rabbani, the Afghan president and the leader of the Jami'at-e Eslami [Islamic Society], met Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and pledged to destroy those elements in Afghanistan who are threatening Egyptian security."

This report is amazing; it says there are many Arab Muslim combatants in Afghanistan including Egyptians and they have been fighting with the Afghan mojahedin and in the three main factions, that is, the Jami'at-e Eslami led by Borhanoddin Rabbani, the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] led by Golboddin Hekmatyar, and the

Hezb-e Eslami [as published—Ettehad-e Eslami or Islamic Union] led by 'Abdol Rasul Sayyaf against the usurping Russians and the ruling Marxist regime. Afghanistan has been the point of convergence for many jehadi forces from the Muslim countries.

With the vestiges of the savage aggression by the foreign and domestic enemies not obliterated, Afghanistan remains in the throes of internecine strife. Its refugees are grappling with multifarious problems in neighboring countries and the president of Afghanistan wants to send his old colleagues and today's refugees to the slaughterhouse merely for some privileged crumbs on rival groups.

The "Arab-Afghans" have generally been condemned to die in absentia by their lackey ruling governments. Nothing awaits them in their respective countries except the gallows and the firing squads. Those who can be named among such groups are the nine-member Egyptian group sentenced last year, including Muhammad Shawqi al-Islambuli, the brother of Lieutenant Khalid al-Islambuli, the officer who carried out the revolutionary execution of the traitor al-Sadat and was subsequently sentenced and martyred by a firing squad. Muhammad al-Islambuli is also one of the most prominent principled Islamic figures in the Arab world. This issue is worth assessing:

First, Borhanoddin Rabbani is quite isolated on the domestic front and faces problems. This is why he has agreed to obtain some privileges from the Arab governments who are behind this issue, even at the expense of his own political prestige. He wants to compensate for his failure and defeat in the internal conflict in this manner.

Borhanoddin Rabbani does not intend to carry out this action. Acting on this pledge will do nothing but spawn further problems for Rabbani among the Muslim revolutionaries. It is unlikely that Rabbani would stake all the gains of years of endeavor and jehad in this way.

Second, the Arab governments and the Egyptian regime are in such dread and horror of principled Islamic leanings [osul-gera'i—fundamentalism] that they are hunting all Muslim forces, wherever they are, and at all costs. This indicates that the anti-Islamic governments and the powers of world arrogance are seriously seeking to uproot such principled leanings internationally. This calls for greater vigilance, acumen, and awareness by the Muslims than ever.

Third, the Muslim revolutionary forces, including the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with their alert and timely action, should strive to avert another "Black September" [reference to the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian Accord] and extend the necessary support to the lives and lifeblood of the Muslims.

Fourth, the agents of the powers of arrogance realize that an important factor in the victory of Islamism is the unity and solidarity among the Muslims, so they seek to instigate one subservient head of state and exert pressure on some of the revolutionary individuals by directing public attention toward them, thus paving the way for discord and crises.

Egypt's 'Anti-Iranian Propaganda' in UAE Condemned

NC1112133593 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 2 Dec 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Egypt Has Activated Its Artillery in the Emirates! A Warning to the 'Wise Men of the Nation' in the Emirates"]

[Text] The Egyptian regime's propaganda artillery has once again been activated against the Islamic Republic of Iran. AL-KHALIJ, which is published in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] by elements of the Egyptian regime, wrote in its latest issue under the headline "On This Day" that on this day in 1971, Iranian forces—with British consent—occupied the Greater and Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa islands.

This Egyptian newspaper published in the UAE continued its babblings in regard to this issue by telling a heart-rending tale to its readers in an attempt to once again propound the issue of the three islands in the way that the Cairo regime wants to portray the issue, seeking to achieve its objectives through these babblings and propaganda.

This is not the first time that the Cairo regime has tried to upset relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the southern littoral countries in the Persian Gulf and aimed its poisonous propaganda at Islamic Iran in a bid to show that Egypt apparently supports Arab interests in the Persian Gulf. But is this the truth? Does Cairo actually care about the interests of the UAE and the Persian Gulf Arabs, or is it pursuing other objectives?

The issue is that the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, especially the UAE leaders, are well aware of who their friends and foes are, and even though they avoid identifying who their true friends and foes are, nevertheless they understand the genuine and tangible truth that Cairo is pursuing specific objectives in the Persian Gulf and that by fanning the flames of the three islands, it is only trying to muddy the waters for its own benefit.

But it is regrettable that there are times when the UAE displays naivete at some forums and finds it difficult to recognize genuine and tangible truths.

The UAE's high-ranking officials must at least realize the character of AL-KHALIJ when they consider the faces behind it and the fact that they are go-betweens for the Cairo regime.

This newspaper is actually operating as the "Cairo regime's propaganda artillery"; and if today we see that it is resorting to anti-Iranian propaganda, this is not accidental, but is precisely a "propaganda counterattack by Egypt" against the UAE's recent wise decisions.

Let us not forget that recently high-ranking UAE officials called for a solution to bilateral problems through peaceful talks with the Islamic Republic of Iran and spoke about a visit by the UAE foreign minister to Iran.

Under such conditions, Cairo feels that with the peaceful solution of the problem of the three islands, it would have no pretexts left for muddying the Persian Gulf waters, hence its efforts to hatch plots.

The wise men of the nation in the UAE should beware of the impacts and repercussions of the poisonous atmosphere that the Cairo regime is creating in their country. The truth should be pointed out to them that despite Cairo's propaganda, Islamic Iran has always displayed goodwill and sincerity in its actions and that the UAE has on several occasion witnessed this goodwill and sincerity. But it has always been the hands of foreigners that have overtly and covertly worked to frustrate the expanding relations between the two countries, and unfortunately the efforts in the UAE which have been mainly designed to achieve foreign objectives have been successful to a certain extent.

As far as Islamic Iran is concerned, the UAE can count on its sincerity and goodwill. But at the same time it may be necessary for the UAE officials to act more vigorously to neutralize foreign plots in their country and not allow a hireling newspaper to act so impudently to disrupt relations between them and a powerful neighbor like the Islamic Republic of Iran.

MKO, Iraq Blamed for Killing Turkish Diplomat

LD1312151493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpts] According to dispatches, the monafeqin [hypocrites] or Mojahedin-e Khalq [MKO], has confessed to mistakingly killing a Turkish diplomat instead of an Iranian diplomat in Baghdad. Based on an announcement released by the organization yesterday, the Turkish diplomat, while nearing the monafeqin security zone in Baghdad, was fired on and killed by the monafeqin, who thought he was an Iranian diplomat.

Of course this is not the first time the monafeqin terrorist organization, in an attempt to justify its crimes, has resorted to baseless argumentation. Even a simpleton cannot believe such a crime could be justified merely on the pretext that the Turkish diplomat's car was similar to the automobile lately used by the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad. If such an argument is accepted, then there ought to occur scores of killings in different world capitals every day. Most protocol cars of embassies in various countries are identical. Therefore, one must say that the monafeqin, on account of their recent problems with the Turkish Government, on account of restrictions imposed on their terrorist operations in Turkey, have committed such a blatant crime to take revenge on the Turkish officials. [passage omitted]

One expects such acts from a terrorist organization that already has an adverse record of numerous criminal acts over past years. The significant point in all this is that the Baghdad government provided the facilities for this terrorist organization to carry out its operations. Moreover, the Baghdad government continues to back this organization.

Undoubtedly, the main responsibility for the killing of the Turkish diplomat in Baghdad rests with the Iraqi officials; they have made Baghdad a haven for monafeqin terrorist operations. As long as facilities continue to be provided for the monafeqins, such crimes will continue; this will not be their last crime. Therefore, the Baghdad government should pay greater attention to the adverse consequences of such a collaboration.

Besharati: MKO Disturbing Security in Turkey

LD1312164793 Tehran IRNA in English 1541 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 13, IRNA—The Turkish Government has exerted some restrictions on the terrorist Mujahideen Khalq Organization (MKO) members in Turkey, Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati said here Monday [13 December].

Besharati speaking to reporters said that the presence of MKO elements in Turkey had disturbed the security in that country.

MKO elements attacked two Turkish diplomats in Baghdad last Saturday, killing one of them, Caglar Yucel, and wounding the other one, Huseyin Kerimoglu.

However, the MKO announced that the attack was carrid out "by mistake."

Diplomatic sources said the Turkish Government had rejected the MKO reasoning as "an invalid and void pretext".

Referring to Iran-Turkey border cooperation, Besharati said that no country could solve its border problems unilaterally.

He said that Iran-Turkey share 510 kms. of joint borders, which he said should be kept calm. The two countries have made significant efforts in this regard, he added.

MKO 'Member' Reveals Plans To Disrupt Paris Ties

NC1212075893 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 23 Nov 93 p 14

[Report on IRNA interview with a member of the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, MKO, by unidentified correspondent in Tehran on 22 November]

[Excerpts] A member of the Monafeqin [Hypocrites, a reference to the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, MKO] organization who participated in the recent attack by agents of this small group on French centers in Tehran revealed details of the Monafeqin's plans to disrupt Tehran-Paris relations. Ehsan Zahedi, a veteran member of the Monafeqin, admitted in this interview that the plan involved two operational teams that carried out the attacks against the French interests in Tehran under the name of Hezbollah and that one of these teams entered Iran through Iraq.

He said: We were told that we should do something to strain relations between Iran and France so that France would accept our members more easily. The arrested Monafeq revealed that he had been assigned to plant a time bomb in the AFP office in Tehran but was arrested a few minutes before he could do so.

Referring to the fact that he had cooperated with someone named Mohammad Heyvari in the attack on the Air France office in Tehran, Ehsan Zahedi stated that Heyvari had a prison record for his activities with the MKO. He said that Heyvari had been granted amnesty out of Islamic goodwill but reverted to his activities after he went to Iraq and was later inducted into a Monafeqin group and retrained. Mohammad Heyvari left the country after the attack on the Air France office.

With thanks to the Information Ministry's public relations department for providing our correspondent with the opportunity to interview the arrested Monafeq, we present the interview as follows:

[Correspondent] Please introduce yourself and tell us why you were arrested.

[Zahedi] I am Ehsan Zahedi, son of Nowruz, born in and a resident of Gorgan. I have been arrested for having contacts with the Monafeqin organization and participating in their operations, including the attack on the Air France office in Tehran and an abortive attempt to plant a bomb in the AFP office.

I had radio and telephone contacts with the Monafeqin in 1984-85. In those days, my work was mostly related to propaganda—distributing statements and inscribing slogans—until in 1985, when I received a message over the radio telling me to go to Turkey. I intended to go to Orumiyeh first, when I was interrogated at Miandoab and arrested on suspicion. I spent five days in prison.

In prison, I said that one of my relatives is a soldier, that I was going to the region to see him, and that I had no other information. I was then released, and I returned to Gorgan. I explained to my contact in the Organization that I was arrested in Miandoab as I was leaving that region. They said that I should not go to Turkey because I might be arrested and that I should not contact them for a while.

I entered the military in 1986 and returned in 1988. In 1991, one of my fellow citizens was close to the Monafeqin, and I once again joined the organization by contacting them on the telephone.

[Correspondent] What were your responsibilities in 1990?

[Zahedi] At that time, my officer in charge was a woman named Nasrin, who told me at my first meeting with her that I should work for the internal headquarters in Gorgan. When I asked what the internal headquarters were, and she said that it implied propaganda work and causing disruption.

[Correspondent] What steps did you take in this regard?

[Zahedi] During this period, I was sent two consignments of propaganda literature, including portraits and tracts [preceding word in English]. One was sent in Shahrivar [23 August-22 September] 1992 and the other in Khordad [22 May-21 June] 1993. On both occasions, I was only able to distribute a small quantity of literature, and I destroyed the rest because I was afraid of being arrested. Over the course of the last year, Nasrin constantly insisted that I identify and persuade a number of MKO supporters and others to go to Iraq. Of course, I was not successful in this regard except in one case, despite immense efforts.

[Correspondent] Will you elaborate further on this one individual that you identified for this purpose?

[Zahedi] This woman was the wife of one of my friends and was named 'Atiyeh Hasanzadeh. She had three children, and she was having intense differences with her husband. On the pretext of resolving her problems, I met her covertly and mentioned the MKO. I suggested that, if she wanted to, I could send her abroad on behalf of the MKO. She agreed, on the condition that she would be sent to Europe.

[Correspondent] What led you to participate in the attack on the Air France office?

[Zahedi] After I obtained 'Atiyeh's concurrence two months ago, I contacted Nasrin and explained how I had gotten 'Atiyeh's attention and that she was not ready to remain in Iraq and wanted to go to Europe. I also said that I was unable to get her very interested in the MKO.

Nasrin encouraged me and told me not to worry. She said: When we reach Iraq, we will convince her to work with us there. For the moment, just say that the organization has agreed to send her to Europe. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] What was the Monafeqin's motive for carrying out these attacks?

[Zahedi] Mohammad told me that the main members of the MKO wanted to leave Iraq and go to France. He said that we should do something to mar relations between Iran and France so that France would readily accept our people, especially since the Iranian government would take a stand against France if we went there and we could capitalize on these conditions.

He said that we should not state that the MKO had carried out the operations but we should say that the supporters of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Hezbollah are responsible. All this has been planned in such a way that there should be no clue about the MKO's involvement and the blame should fall on the regime. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] How did you obtain the necessary weapons?

[Zahedi] When Mohammad told us the date of the operations, I asked him about arms and ammunition. He said that he would let us know when the time came. Early Tuesday morning, Mohammad left the house and returned at 9:05 a.m. with a bag in his hand, from which he removed a Colt pistol, grenades, and a cyanide pill. He took some weapons for himself, and we left the house after he briefed us on the plan again.

After reaching the area and strolling around for a while, I drove the motorcycle closer to the Air France office. Mohammad then left to throw a grenade into the office and returned immediately. We quickly left the area.

[Correspondent] Did you have any idea about the attack on the French Embassy in Tehran?

[Zahedi] Personally, I had no such information, but Mohammad was apparently aware of it. After we fled the scene, we parked the motorcycle in one of the streets near Vali-ye 'Asr and went inside the parking lot. Mohammad then made a few calls from a public phone booth, but he did not tell me who had called. I asked him about the assignments of Parviz and Asadollah, and he said that they had some operations to carry out. When I asked where, he replied: At the French embassy, and they were successful.

[Correspondent] Earlier you mentioned an abortive attempt at planting a bomb in the AFP office in Tehran. Can you give us some details about this?

[Zahedi] That same night, Mohammad told me that some people had tried to catch him when he threw the grenade at the Air France office. He said that there was a possibility that they would identify him. Therefore, he said, I should split up with him and he would leave the country. He also said that I would have to carry out the second phase of the operation alone. He then brought a time bomb and showed me how to set it up. He then said that this bomb should be placed in the AFP office so that it would explode on a workday during office hours.

When I protested that people would be killed, he said that the second phase of the operations was to be one that entailed some bloodshed and human and material losses. The first phase was merely propaganda to create an atmosphere in which the Hezbollah would be blamed, and this was supposed to provide more suitable conditions for our operations.

Mohammad stressed that I avoid being arrested at any cost and that this assignment was vital to the MKO. He said: The operations had been planned under the direct supervision of the leadership and, for security reasons, only a few persons are aware of the operations. He said that we were working as an independent cell. We had to carry out the task without leaving any clues. If there was any danger of arrest, we were supposed to commit suicide by swallowing a cyanide pill or using a weapon.

After giving me these details and the address and location of the building, he explained how to carry out the mission. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Once the attacks had been carried out against the embassy and the airlines office, why were there additional operations?

[Zahedi] I asked Mohammad the same question, and he said: There is no doubt that if these operations are carried out correctly, an atmosphere will be generated among foreign countries, especially Western ones, and the Islamic Republic of Iran will be held responsible. This is extremely advantageous to us and will have a direct effect on the future of our resistance. [passage omitted] [Zahedi ends]

IRNA adds: According to Zahedi's confession and the information provided by the Information Ministry, the attacks on French installations in Tehran were carried out by two two-man teams of the Monafeqin. Ehsan Zahedi and Mohammad Heyvari attacked the Air France office in Tehran. Two other Monafeqin members, Asadollah Bahrami and Parviz Zerafatkhah, carried out the attack on the French Embassy in Tehran. Asadollah Bahrami and Parviz Zerafatkhah were killed as they were trying to leave the country, and Mohammad Heyvari has left the country.

Last year, Parviz Zerafatkhah was arrested for maintaining contacts with the Monafeqin and for possessing a code to contact the organization. He was released after he provided an explanation and after he was given some guidance.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Meets Envoys to CIS

LD1312164993 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] In a meeting today with heads of Iranian diplomatic missions in the Commonwealth [of Independent States] and the Caucasus, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani gave assurances about efforts to implement recent agreements and stressed the importance of expanding bilateral and regional cooperation with all the countries in that region.

The meeting discussed the outcome of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's recent successful trip to Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan. Developments in Russia and the Caucasus were also discussed.

The mission heads in the CIS and the Caucasus are in Tehran to take part in a regional seminar.

Iranian, Turkish Roles in Azerbaijan Viewed

NC1112155293 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 2 Dec 93 p 15

[Commentary by Dr. Mohammad Baqer Sadr: "The Plot To Dismember the Republic of Azerbaijan"]

[Text] The Minsk Group, which has been making preparations for the talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia, has unfortunately referred to the dismemberment of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan in its plan. On the basis of this plan, part of Azerbaijan's territory, including Shusha and Lachin—the corridors linking Karabakh to Armenia—might be handed to Armenia. The Tehran plan envisaged a type of increased self-rule for Karabakh and withdrawal from all the other occupied territories. The Tehran peace plan did not succeed because of ploys, including Armenia's occupation of Shusha. In those days, Baku was involved in a power struggle, and the Armenians seized the opportunity to strengthen their forces. Russian imperialism also continued its covert assistance to Armenia so that it could inflict the final blow when the time was ripe. The resumption of the power struggle in Azerbaijan granted Armenia such favorable conditions that 25 percent of Azerbaijan's territory was occupied by Armenian forces in less than three months and Armenia's aggressing forces reached the Khoda-Afarin bridge on our borders with Azerbaijan. Thus, in addition to Karabakh, areas such as Agdam, Lachin, Shusha, Kelbadzhar, Kubatly, Dzhebrail, and Zaneglan were occupied by the aggressors. The other outcome of this was 16,000 martyred and 22,000 wounded, with nearly 1 million refugees. Turkey, which is a member of the Minsk Group, along with Russia and the European Community representatives, has—until now—remained silent on all this.

Is Turkey unhappy with the removal of Elchibey and the coming to power of Geydar Aliyev? Is the West—which is Turkey's ally in NATO—preventing Turkey from taking any steps to support Azerbaijan? Is Turkey aware of the extreme nationalistic objectives of the Armenians, who claim part of Turkey's territory as well? There are dozens of other such questions that, when answered, will help clarify the situation.

Turkey—which is involved with extremist Kurds in Hakkari—is trying, parallel with its efforts to infiltrate the Central Asian countries and the Caucasus, to thwart plans that are aimed at its own dismemberment and is complaining about the actions by some of its neighbors, particularly Syria.

In my opinion, our country's national interests dictate that the tension that more or less exists in Iranian-Turkish relations should be reduced and then neutralized. In the same way that our country has good relations with Pakistan, it can also have and increase its neighborly relations with Turkey. Also, in view of the three countries' membership in the Economic Cooperation Organization, the grounds for expanding relations do exist, and farsightedness and expediency dictate that, despite their differing views, all three countries rush to the assistance of Azerbaijan to prevent its defeat and dismemberment.

It should be clearly stated that there are individuals within the political circles of both countries who are not happy with the rapprochement among Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran. However, in view of the conditions that are leading the world to a unipolar system and in view of the visible and invisible pressures that exist against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the possibility that the views of these individuals affect matters must be removed. The fact that Azerbaijan's dismemberment, and even its military defeat, will be detrimental to the independence and territorial integrity of both Iran and Turkey should be clearly stated. Also, those elements in both countries who are entertaining certain thoughts should be prevented from doing anything. We should be alert because world imperialism has started playing many political and military tunes to prevent tranquility and development in the region. It is the duty of each and every person who attaches any value to the independence and territorial integrity of the homeland and of its neighbors to avoid such traps.

We should be alert because a threat to the territorial integrity of each one of these countries is a threat against the territorial integrity of the other. It is on the basis of this principle that we should think of joint measures. A look at the history of relations among these countries shows that there have been many such cases of joint measures in the past. At any rate, it is up to the makers of foreign policy in both countries to try to have a positive effect on regional developments and, while preserving neighborly relations, to make a joint effort so that Azerbaijan's independence and territorial integrity are not threatened and, in this way, to guard our homeland's national interests next to the national interests of our neighbors and especially of Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Daily Calls for 'Direct' Talks in Tajikistan

LD1312145893 Tehran IRNA in English 1359 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec 13, IRNA—The Persian daily 'ABRAR' Monday [14 December] welcomed the new pace of developments in Tajikistan and said a better situation can be expected in Dushanbe once the situation in the neighbouring country is improved.

In a reconciliatory move, Tajikistan President Imamali Rakhmanov recently announced readiness to negotiate with the opposition groups.

The daily in a commentary said that the move initiated by Dushanbe would probably draw the attention of certain opposition groups based in Moscow but surely not all of them.

The article recommended Rakhmanov's government to hold "direct and constructive negotiations" with all groups involved and let them share the power if he hopes to overcome the existing difficulties and restore peace in the country.

However, the daily expressed pessimism over the introduction of changes in Tajikistan given the attitudes of both Moscow and Dushanbe.

The change in the policies could be considered as a good omen and there will be hope that such decisions would pave the way for comprehensive negotiations with all opponent groups, concluded ABRAR.

Velayati Meets Finnish Deputy Foreign Minister

LD1212151693 Tehran IRNA in English 1453 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec 12, IRNA—Finnish Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs Sund Bek, currently here to attend the third session of Irano-Finland joint economic commission, met and conferred with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Sunday [12 December].

The two discussed economic cooperation and the outcome of the two previous sessions of the joint economic commission. They both agreed that holding sessions of the joint economic commission would pave the way for further deepening of bilateral cooperation.

Velayati and Bek also discussed certain international and regional issues.

Bek arrived here Saturday.

Paper Lauds IAEA Report on Nuclear Program

NC1112103693 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 Dec 93 p 14

[Political commentary: "The IAEA Clarification: An Answer to the West's Babblings"]

[Text] Dr. Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], has stated that the outcome of the visit by IAEA inspectors to the Islamic Republic of Iran was very positive.

Handing this report to the IAEA in Vienna, he said that the agency's inspectors very freely inspected all of Iran's nuclear installations in Aban [month ending 21 November] and that officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran actively cooperated with this delegation. The IAEA chief said that this delegation's inspection of Iran's nuclear installations was an important step toward removing existing false ideas on the nuclear programs of some countries.

This is not the first time that the peaceful nature of the Islamic Republic's nuclear programs have been confirmed by the IAEA. Previously too, the IAEA sent delegations to inspect our country's nuclear installations and those delegations also emphasized the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programs.

The IAEA's stance on the Islamic Republic of Iran is the clearest answer that can be given to babblings by hegemonistic powers that ignore that agency's reports and have always tried to falsely accuse the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to mask their own support for the nuclear arsenals of the regime occupying Jerusalem. Last year IAEA chief Hans Blix stated that Israel should also be included among the places where nuclear weapons are to be dismantled as part of the Middle East peace process. He stated that an area free from nuclear weapons requires that Israel also abandon its nuclear capability. Nevertheless, under pressures from America and other Western powers that support the regime occupying Palestine, he has never been able to send investigation teams to occupied Palestine.

Hans Blix's remarks clearly refer to the existence of nuclear weapons in occupied Palestine and to the Zionists' opposition to any effort to send delegations there. For years now the Zionists have been investing immensely on nuclear projects in occupied Palestine with American support. They are receiving all types of financial and technical support from the Americans in the manufacture of such weapons. Not only have the Zionists not hidden there efforts and the American support for their nuclear programs, but they have even very impudently been boasting about their progress in these projects. With America's political support, they are the only party to the Middle East compromise talks that is refusing to allow international teams to inspect their nuclear installations. This is a fact of which all the Arab regimes longing for peace with the regime occupying Jerusalem are aware; and Hans Blix and other high-ranking IAEA officials have also admitted this on several occasions during their visits to Middle East countries.

The fact is that if it is the IAEA's duty to prevent non-peaceful nuclear projects around the world, then it should begin to confront those governments that disregard all limitations on the use of weapons of mass destruction. The Americans and the Zionists have repeatedly proven with their actions that they do not recognize any laws, criteria, or commitments on the use of weapons of mass destruction or in perpetrating crimes against the human lives. Therefore, these are the governments that deserve stricter pressures by world forums.

If international laws and world commitments are so easily trampled on by impudent regimes that are not punished for their acts and if laws do not differentiate between obedient and disobedient governments, what our world recognizes as universal law will be nothing more than mere words on paper that only take up space in the archives of international bodies. The IAEA should be able to prove with its actions that it is not affected by pressures from any side.

Adviser Assesses 'Alarming' Rial Situation

LD1312104993 Tehran IRNA in English 1005 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 13, IRNA—Presidential advisor Morteza Alviri expressed concern over the present currency situation in Iran as the rial sank to 2,100 against the U.S. dollar on Sunday [12 December].

In an interview with the English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES', published Monday, Alviri said "the situation is alarming but not out of control."

Unofficial speculations speak of further decrease of rial exchange rate against the hard currencies in the near future, the daily said.

According to Alviri who is the presidential advisor on the country's free trade zones, "There are several suggestions to keep the Iranian rial at its right place including the reintroduction of the multi-rate system as practiced until the end of the last Iranian year (March 21, 1993)."

Alviri formerly served as a Majlis deputy for the second and third terms of the Iranian parliament and as the head of the Majlis plan and budget commission.

"I'm not in favor of introducing the multi-rate system for hard currency as it will again bring financial corruption because of its undue use," he noted.

According to experts, the multi-rate system could not work. When implemented, the government used to provide customers with hard currency rating 70 to 1,300 rials a dollar depending on the nature of the need.

Alviri believed that the country's hard currency income should be increased through promotion of non-oil exports and tourism and that the expenses should be slashed.

Iran earned dlrs. 100 million from foreign tourists last year while according to the 1990-94 first five-year plan it should have been dlrs. 450 million, the daily noted.

He also objected any injection of hard currency into the open market saying that "It's not a good treatment and will not cure the disease."

The senior official further argued that "unjustifed development projects" like the power generation plans should be stopped immediately to save hard currency.

Alviri also favored restrictions on unnecessary travel by government officials and a genuine check on pilgrimages to Saudi Arabia and Syria as ways to save hard currency.

According to the TEHRAN TIMES, the Iranian rial sank to 2,130 against the dollar in the open market in Tehran, from last Thursday's 1,975 rate. The announced rate by the Central Bank was 1,752 rials a dollar on Thursday. The British pound was traded at 3,000 rials in the open market, up from 2,860 rials Thursday. The German mark had gone up from 1,140 to 1,180 rials during the same period.

Official on Sales of Shares in Industries

LD1312103193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0730 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Aproximately 52 million shares of industries under the Ministry of Industries, valued at 410 billion rials, have been transferred to the nongovernmental sector. Announcing this, Mr. Naji, the ministry's deputy in charge of industrial affairs told our reporter that production in industrial units is satisfactory, and that preliminary work to privatize 173 companies has been carried out this year. He added that the shares would sell more quickly and the process of privatization would be more satisfactory if they were paid for in installments. He said that since the revolution the total investment in the industrial sector has been 1,347 billion rials.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Opens Computer Center

LD1412121393 Tehran IRNA in English 1146 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 14, IRNA—Iran's largest computer center at the civil status registration organization's demographic database was inaugurated by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Tuesday [14 December].

The president opened the center by entering the i.d. card number and other information on the founder of the Islamic republic, the late Imam Khomeyni, leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i and he himself.

Later, Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani and his companions inspected various sections of the computer center and visited an exhibition of the birth certificates of great Iranian personalities such as Imam Khomeyni, martyr Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i and martyr Mohammad Javad Bahonar. In a brief speech, the president said basic and up-to-date information was the foundation of all decisions taken by Iranian authorities. A 450-billion rial budget has been spent for the implementation of the project.

Yazdi Comments on Capital, Corporal Punishment

LD1012230293 Tehran IRNA in English 1631 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Shiraz (Fars Prov.) Dec. 10, IRNA—Head of the Judiciary Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi said here today that as the western countries become more acquainted with the Islamic statutory laws of Iran they become less critical of it and in many instances even praise those laws. He said capital punishment is exercised in more than 100 countries in various parts of the world, and more countries are now considering the idea of legalizing capital punishment for certain crimes.

Ayatollah Yazdi said the Islamic 'qesas (corporal punishment of wrongdoers at the insistence of the wronged) in the canonical laws of Islam can be exercised only upon the complaint of the injured person, and if he should forego his right then the qesas will not be carried out on the person having done an act against the person of another. Intentional crimes against the person of another are punishable by qesas in Islam which justifies tit-for-tat remedy at the instance of the injured person.

The ayatollah who arrived here Thursday [9 December] to attend the mourning ceremonies in memory of the post-revolutionary Friday prayer leader of the city Ayatollah 'Abdol-Hoseyn Dastgheyb on the anniverary of his martyrdom left Shiraz for Tehran later Friday.

Karrubi on Resumption of Clerics Society's Activity

NC1112092093 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 4 Dec 93 p 2

[By the KEYHAN correspondent in Rasht]

[Text] The directive by the great leader of the Revolution that the Militant Clerics Society should resume political activity is binding on us, and there is no room for any debate on this subject after the leader's directive.

This was stated in an interview with KEYHAN's correspondent by Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Karrubi, the secretary of the Militant Clerics Society, who came to Rasht to participate in the anniversary of Mirza Kuchak Khan Jangali. He added: Right after this directive by the great leader, the Clerics Society held a meeting, and we adopted some noteworthy decisions at that session. I am following up the decisions of that session, and am scheduled to meet the grand leader again in the near future. I have asked for a meeting with him and I am optimistic that the activity of the Clerics Society will resume this year.

Commenting on the trial of Engineer 'Abdi, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Karrubi stated: The chief of the tribunal at which 'Abdi is to be impeached is Mr. Nayyeri, whose two brothers were martyred. I am hopeful that 'Abdi's problems will be resolved soon.

Pakistan

U.S. Senate Delegation Meets Senate Chairman

BK1412025793 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] The three-member U.S. Senate delegation called on Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad in Islamabad yesterday. The delegation, which includes Larry Pressler and Hank Brown, is led by Thad Cochran. They exchanged views with the Senate chairman on the Kashmir issue, nuclear nonproliferation, and Pakistan-U.S. relations. The Senate chairman expressed grave concern over the atrocities in the occupied Kashmir and said that the United States should exert pressure on India to end these atrocities. He said that the United States is a champion of human rights and it should fulfill its responsibilities regarding occupied Kashmir. Wasim Sajjad told the senators that the United States should also exert pressure on India to peacefully resolve the Kashmir issue. He said that India is ruling the occupied valley on the strength of its armed forces and has deployed more than 400,000 troops to crush the aspiration for freedom of the Kashmiri people. He said that settlement of the Kashmir issue is very important for ensuring peace and stability in the region.

On the Pressler Amendment, Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad said that it is very discriminatory and it failed to achieve the main objective of checking nuclear proliferation. Therefore, it needs to be amended, he added. He said that in view of India's nuclear capability, it is unfair to ask Pakistan to halt its peaceful nuclear program.

Thad Cochran, leader of the three-member U.S. senators' delegation, told the Pakistani Senate chairman that his country desires good friendly relations with both Pakistan and India. He appreciated Pakistan's role in establishing peace in Somalia and other parts of the world.

Foreign Minister Meets Senators

BK1412100593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 14 Dec 93

[Text] The three-member delegation of U.S. senators [comprising Thad Cochran, Larry Pressler, and Hank Brown] held talks with the foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, in Islamabad today. Earlier, the delegation held a meeting with the foreign secretary, Mr. Shaharyar Khan.

Radio Pakistan's representative says the U.S. senators were briefed about the massive human rights violation by the Indian forces in occupied Kashmir. The two sides also exchanged views on Pakistan-U.S. relations and regional situation. Pakistan is also understood to have informed the delegation that it was in favor of nuclear nonproliferation regime in South Asia. Several proposals have been made to India in this connection at international forums. Pakistan also stands for the convening of an international five-nation conference for declaring South Asia as a nuclear weapons free zone.

Visit by Senators, Pressler Amendment Viewed

BK1412083793 Islamabad THE NATION in English 14 Dec 93 p 6

[Editorial: "US Senators' Visit"]

[Text] The three-man US Senators' group, led by Senator Cochran, with Larry Pressler as a member, has arrived in Pakistan after a brief visit to India. In the backdrop of the debate that has just begun in the US about the efficacy of the Pakistan-specific Pressler Amendment on the one hand and the Clinton administration's efforts to make its foreign aid policy less discriminatory and more even-handed, the visit of this group to the Sub-Continent is significant. The irony of India trying to woo the Republican Senators (who were supposed to be pro-Pakistan not very long ago) against the Democrats, traditionally their allies, could not have been lost on the group. Senator Pressler, one can assume, must have been quite pleased to hear eulogies of the Amendment that he authored. It was not too subtle a flattery by the Indians to Pressler's political 'acumen'. While the Indian Prime Minister chose to indirectly condemn the Democrats, which by itself could be pleasing to Republican ears, for trying to neutralise a law that one of the group had authored, he asked his junior Foreign Minister, Salman Khursheed, to adopt another tack of impressing the visitors. Khursheed told the group that any weakening of the Pressler Amendment would only encourage Pakistan to make nuclear weapons. And while such weapons were perfectly safe in Indian hands, in Pakistan's hands those would destabilise the Sub-Continent. That would, he argued, oblige India to 'reassess' its defence policy—a thinly-veiled threat to stockpile even more nuclear weapons and spend even more on its missiles and men.

Whether the Senators found the opportunity to ask India why it was so enamoured of its own nuclear programme and why it was not willing to accept any of the four or five options that Pakistan had made to it to denuclearise the Sub-Continent, one does not know. Yet the fact remains that while India has refused to give up its nuclear programme until all the nuclear powers, including the US, give up theirs, Pakistan is willing and ready to accept even a bilateral deal. If the US Senators find more merit in the Indian position than in Pakistan's and have been more overawed by the Indian threats of expanding its military power, than by considerations of fairplay, then it cannot be helped. The Pressler Amendment has already weakened Pakistan considerably. Pakistan's disadvantage has encouraged-India to defy the UN resolutions on Kashmir and brought death and destruction to Kashmir. Pakistan cannot accept any further weakening of its defence capability.

U.S. Diplomacy Deemed 'Irrelevant'

BK1112091593 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 11 Dec 93 p 6

[Editorial: "The Essential Irrelevance of American Diplomacy"]

[Text] The American Defence Secretary Les Aspin warned last Tuesday that his country must prepare to fight a future 'Desert Storm' against a nuclear armed foe. He, and undoubtedly other strategists in the Clinton Administration, believe that despite their best efforts, nuclear weapons may be developed by 'terrorist states', thus the US must adapt its non-proliferation policy to take such eventually into account. All this led up to the revelation that the US is proposing a 'clarification' to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which would allow them to develop and test a missile defence system "without undermining an important agreement," and other sophisticated weapons to deal with "underground installations". Meanwhile, Vice-President Al Gore was sending out more threatening signals to North Korea about that country's nuclear programme, warning Pyongyang not to underestimate the will and resolve of the 'world community.'

The problem, of course, is that the US has a very narrow understanding of the term 'world'. Even when their domestic teams are playing sports amongst themselves, they sincerely believe that the whole world is playing and the whole world is watching. Thus their baseball leagues, which include one team from Canada out of dozens of local ones, compete for the 'World Series.' The same is the case with their political vision. Yet, the irony is that for all the pretensions of being a melting pot of civilisations and cultures, the American public and its leaders are the most removed from the rest of the world. The Clinton Administration includes people like Joseph S Nye at high positions, a man who specialises in political, strategic and ethical issues of nuclear weapons. These are well meaning people, but so pathetically deluded about their place in the world that they can't differentiate between leadership and hegemonic domination. Joseph Nye's conception of international interdependence, which calls for the US to perceive its own interests at stake in every regional situation, is a carry over from the Cold War strategy, which Mr Aspin seeks to adapt to the changing world situation. It is a dangerously skewed concept, because what the US fails to recognise is the fact that the previous strategy, for what it was worth, was designed to combat an opposing view of world domination, the Soviet view.

The needs of today's nuclear aspiring countries are those of self preservation, not expansion. Even if the US sees those particular countries as being opposed to its 'values', this does not mean that their raison d'etre is one of perpetually challenging the US. But the US cannot guarantee their safety against their regional foes; indeed it has more often shown them by its action and inaction that their only recourse is to the same deterrence that proved so successful for the West and the Soviets in their rivalry. They are labelled 'terrorist' only because they are small and do not have the means to wage war at the same level as their overwhelmingly better equipped opponents, like the Kashmiris against India, the Palestinians against Israel. The US cannot lead the world without marching with it, much as it cannot rule the world without openly imposing itself through tyranny.

The interdependence theory unfortunately leads to the latter, particularly when put into practice by individuals as narrow minded about 'world community' as those who make up this administration. At their best moments, they look like fumbling bureaucrats, as in Somalia and Haiti. At their worst, they stand out as hypocrites and bullies, as with Bosnia, Israel, India, Iraq, North Korea etc. And Pakistan.

If the US can't understand, or chooses to ignore the security concerns of states in a unipolar world, it is not our fault. Our perceptions of justice are different too. That is why the American world view and their perception of us is irrelevant to how we go about securing our defence needs. By letting them determine the parameters of the language and the terms of argument, we only undermine our own stance. Remember that one country's terrorist is another's hero. Fortunately, we don't play in the American 'World Series.' And we shouldn't start.

Status of Textile Industry, U.S. Talks Viewed

BK1112085093 Islamabad THE NATION in English 11 Dec 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Textile quandary"]

[Text] With the US quota for Pakistani textiles due to lapse on December 31, the recent round of talks between US and Pakistani officials has ended in a failure, much to the chagrin of our exporters. This could naturally have serious repercussions on the textile sector, a sector already beset with a host of ills. At stake in this round of negotiations was more than $550 million annual trade of a variety of Pakistani textiles and the pressing demand of textile export associations to raise the annual aggregate quota. Pakistan, in return for certain concessions in the quotas of a few value added categories, had agreed to accept the US dictate of incorporating a punitive clause in any agreement under which they would be authorised to deduct three times the existing quota in the event of circumvention. But all such efforts have proved futile. Such tidings could not come at a worse time for the textile industry. For one, there is uncertainty about the cotton crop this year, estimated at nine million bales by experts. The sharp fall in production over the recent past has lowered economic growth with a resultant fall in export earnings from textiles, amounting to 63 per cent of total foreign exchange earnings. In short, if the same occurs this year, it will play havoc with the targeted growth rate of seven per cent for the economy. One fundamental reason which explains why our textile exports have performed so miserably when compared to competitors such as India is that far too many textile mills this side of the border have been producing extremely low count yarn and coarse cloth, of little marketability in the international arena. The bulk of the money spent on importing machinery over the last two years has been on textile machinery and consequently about 100 textile mills sprouted in the Punjab. Unfortunately, the new mill owners and those entrepreneurs already in the industry who promptly expanded their capacity, had their eyes on the large kickbacks of foreign exchange at the import stage rather than running their mills efficiently and economically. The end result, too many yarn mills and costs of production too exorbitant for export. Today, about one third of the active capacity of the textile industry is idle.

Apart from the inconsequential dent that our textile exports are making in the US and European markets, Pakistan has fallen short in devising an aggressive export policy for other non-traditional markets such as those of Africa, the Far East and Latin America. But the fault is not entirely our own. There are several importing countries which do their utmost to discourage the import of value-added goods, displaying a marked preference for raw materials. Granted that the US has been unnecessarily harsh in their treatment, but perhaps Pakistan's reliance on the expansion of quotas is somewhat unrealistic. Perhaps we could take a leaf out of the book of countries such as Hong Kong, which although not indigenously growing the crop, have captured a sizeable share of the international market.

U.S. Urged To Review Trade Stance

BK1212142393 Islamabad KHABRAIN in Urdu 12 Dec 93 p 10

[Editorial: "Pakistan-U.S. Trade—Need for a Review of the U.S. Attitude"]

[Text] John Monjo, the U.S. ambassador in Pakistan, addressing a seminar on "Trade With the United States" in Peshawar the other day, said that the two countries should work together to increase bilateral economic cooperation. The climate for bilateral trade is good and the Pakistani products can find a good market in the United States. He referred to U.S.-Pakistan cooperation on several issues, including the Afghanistan problem.

There is no denying that whatever the U.S. ambassador said at the seminar organized by the Peshawar Chamber of Commerce and Industry is advantageous and true, but given the U.S. attitude toward trade and Pakistan's other needs, it can be said that the U.S. envoy, too, has paid mere lip service. As Ilyas Ahmad, the president of the Peshawar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has said, the element of sentimentalism needs to be eliminated to promote trade between the two countries. How can bilateral trade flourish when the U.S. talks of declaring Pakistan a terrorist state, makes it a target of the Pressler Amendment, imposes undue restrictions against it, and declares Islamabad as the supporter of fundamentalists? If Washington wishes to increase its trade with Pakistan, it should review its policies and attitude.

The ongoing negotiations between the two countries on the sale of Pakistani textiles to the United States also reflects the actual U.S. attitude toward Pakistan in the field of trade. There have already been two rounds of negotiations, but no progress has yet been made owing to the harsh attitude adopted by the United States. The last round of bilateral negotiations on textiles was held in Geneva last week, which did not yield any results. The next round is scheduled to be held in Washington on 20 December. According to the Pakistani Finance Ministry, Washington is prolonging the dialogue with the aim of squeezing political benefits out of these trade negotiations. The people dealing in textiles have been expressing grave concern over the stand taken by the United States. The term of the quota fixed by the U.S. for the purchase of cotton cloths, etc. from Pakistan is due to expire on 31 December 1993 and the fixation of the quota and the signing of an agreement on this issue before that stipulated date is crucial for the Pakistani textile industry and trade. If this is not done, it will affect textile and other exports and seriously harm the existing export trade environment.

It has been learned from informed sources that the U.S. wants to impose certain conditions regarding textile exports in order to achieve certain other objectives. Even though Pakistan agreed to accept certain conditions, the U.S. representatives could not agree to sign an accord in this regard. Pakistan wants the United States to increase the quota of its textile imports to help boost Pakistan's exports. Pakistan's textile exports have been considerably affected by certain decisions of the European Union and the United States last year. Dozens of Pakistani textile units have been badly hit by such decisions. In Lahore alone , there are more than two dozen textile units that have been partially or wholly affected.

In light of whatever he said in Peshawar, the U.S. ambassador should send specific recommendations to his government in order to help expand trade and strengthen economic relations between the two countries, because a consolidation of economic ties leads to a consolidation of political relations. We would also like to urge the Government of Pakistan to pay attention to the crisis facing the textile industry, try to ensure the success of negotiations with the United States, and also find new markets for exports so that this crisis may not worsen and lead to further unemployment and popular unrest.

Minister Claims Turkey To Help With U.S. Ties

BK1312092993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said that Turkey assured Pakistan that it will use its influence to improve the relations between Pakistan and the United States. He addressed newsmen on his return to Islamabad from Turkey last night and said Turkey enjoys very good relations with the United States and it will urge the U.S. Administration to adopt a better approach toward Pakistan.

About the abrogation of the Pressler Amendment, the foreign minister said it will be decided by the U.S. Congress.

Minister Reviews Bhutto's Visit to Turkey, Iran

BK1312162693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Iran and Turkey have reiterated their full support to Pakistan's position on Jammu and Kashmir and called for settlement of the dispute on the basis of UN resolutions. This was stated by the foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, at a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon while giving details about the prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto's, visit to the two brotherly countries and her talks with their leaders. [passage omitted]

The foreign minister said the prime minister held in-depth discussions with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in Tehran on the entire spectrum of bilateral relations. Iranian leaders were keen that Pakistan take the lead in yet another round of efforts to bring about national reconciliation in Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Pakistan assured to do so shortly.

The foreign minister said the prime minister's talks with the Turkish president, Mr. Suleyman Demirel, and the prime minister, Miss Ciller, showed that Pakistan and Turkey shared identical perceptions on bilateral and international issues. The prime minister conveyed to Turkish leaders her country's wholehearted support on Cyprus. She also discussed with the Turkish leaders the situation in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Central Asia and joint efforts within the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] framework to boost cooperation in the region.

The foreign minister said that the prime ministers of Pakistan and Turkey will be visiting Sarajevo shortly to demonstrate their solidarity with the people of that beleaguered city. They are likely to be accompanied by the former British prime minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, who had been critical of Western policies on Bosnia. Their visit will be a special gesture toward the brave women of Sarajevo.

The foreign minister described the visit of the prime minister as a breakthrough in economic interaction with both Iran and Turkey. He said it also served the vital objective of rekindling the warmth and vitality in relations between Pakistan and these countries.

The special assistant to the prime minister, Mr. Shahid Hussain Khan, referred to the agreement reached between Pakistan and Iran to complete a project on regional basis for the import of gas from Qatar, Oman, and Iran.

Iranian Mediation on Kashmir Accepted

LD1312142193 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 1100 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Iran and Turkey have reiterated their full support for Pakistan's position on occupied Kashmir and called for the settlement of the dispute on the basis of UN resolutions. This was stated by the Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali at a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon.

He gave details about the Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's visits to the two brotherly countries and her talks with their leaders. The foreign minister said

Iran also deplored the continuing repression by the Indian forces in occupied Kashmir. He said Iran agreed that India should not vitiate the atmosphere for the forthcoming foreign secretaries' level talks by continuing cruelties on the innocent Kashmiri people. He said Pakistan has accepted the Iranian offer for a mediatory role for the settlement of the Kashmir issue.

Border Trade With PRC To Be Increased

BK1112093093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Pakistan-China border trade via Khunjerab Pass will be increased to strengthen the existing friendly relations between the two countries. This was stated by the chief executive of northern areas, retired Lieutenant General Mohammad Shafiq, during a briefing about the structure, share capital, and quantum of trade between the two countries. The briefing was given by the managing director of Northern Areas Traders Cooperative in Gilgit. He asked for expanding avenues of joint ventures in the fields of tourism, trade, construction, and industries for the mutual benefit of the people of the bordering regions of the two countries.

Bhutto Gives Condolences After 'Terrorist' Attack

BK1112030693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 11 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto expressed profound grief and offered her heartfelt condolences at the death of an innocent person, who refused to comply with an appeal to observe a strike, in Karachi on Thursday. Talking to Pakistani reporters in Ankara, she said the people of Sindh have struggled for democracy and peace, and for a better and prosperous life. They have tolerated oppression and tyranny in the past and now they want a better future for their children. Benazir Bhutto declared that no terrorist incident of any magnitude will keep the government from fulfilling the mandate given to it by the people. We are determined to establish a progressive society and antinational elements will never succeed in their designs to harm popular democracy at the behest of their secret masters, the prime minister added.

Bhutto Family Feud, PPP Split Detailed

BK1212115793 Karachi DAWN in English 12 Dec 93 pp 1, 15

[Text] Karachi, Dec 11—Mir Murtaza Bhutto said here on Saturday [11 December] the Pakistan Pepole's Party may be divided between Bhuttos and Zardaris, hinting that family feuds and not only political differences had contributed to the current crisis within the party.

Stressing that the PPP CEC's [Pakistan People's Party Central Executive Committee] decision may split the party, the younger brother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto told DAWN on the premises of Speedy Trial Court, "I am afraid that division is very much on. The dedicated workers and the original spirit of the party will continue to be led by Begum Bhutto and the opportunists will only find shelter under Begum Zardari".

In his first reaction to the removal of Begum Nusrat Bhutto as chairman of the party by the CEC on Dec 5, Murtaza Bhutto referred to his sister Benazir Bhutto as Begum Zardari and said, "it will be Bhuttos Vs Zardaris," reflecting the degree of wedge that has been created in the family.

"The unconstitutional and wholly illegal removal of Begum Bhutto from the chairmanship of the party was carried out by the Robber Barons mafia which has hijacked the Peoples Party," he said, adding, "the CEC does not have such authority, or mandate because it is unelected."

"In their paranoia and greed they have divided the party and split it into two, something Zia's brutal dictatorship could not do in 11 years," said Mr Bhutto.

Earlier, Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Murtaza Bhutto had denied any family friction linked with Zardari factor, maintaining that the brother and sister had differing perceptions on political priorities and the role of PPP.

Although Mr Bhutto did not spell out differences with Zardaris, his mother had, on Dec 6, publicly denied that Asif Zardari, husband of Benazir Bhutto, had anything to do with the CEC's decision.

Begum Bhutto has also denied 'existence of any dispute on property.'

Demanding elections to be held by the party workers at the ward level, Murtaza Bhutto said, "let there be elections in the party, let there be an elected CEC has taken over the party, it has not been able to win two-third majority," said Mr Bhutto [sentence as published].

"Constitutional provisions of the party must strictly be enforced for this purpose, including careful scrutiny of the workers to be made by themselves," he said, adding "no sudden or unprincipled entries should be allowed."

This was an apparent reference to moves by the ruling party to commence enrollment of members for the projected party elections.

"Step-by-step process must be followed right up to the CEC and all those who left the party in times of struggle, joined Martial Law forces in any form or were part of Majlis-i-Shoora must stand immediately disqualified," he said.

Murtaza Bhutto was of the opinion that the party his father had founded had "deviated from its original crusade as a party of the poor and the oppressed to a party of opportunists and self-seekers."

He contended that the PPP had changed from a "champion of the alienated and dispossessed to a defender of the rich and the corrupt and a party of the Robber Barons."

Later, talking to journalists before the proceedings of his case Mr Bhutto said he was unable to figure out as to what might have prompted his sister to take such hasty and controversial decision.

He said: "I really don't know what was the triggering factor Perhaps she was made to believe that because she had won the elections twice and become Prime Minister, there will be no opposition."

Mr Bhutto contended that ever since he decided to contest elections, "she (Benazir Bhutto) started feeling nervous although from the first day I had declared that I am not interested in any position."

He said the CEC was not authorised to take such decision because it was handpicked and, therefore, illegal and unconstitutional.

Mir Murtaza Bhutto also favoured return of many of the former PPP members who had left the party at same stage, and said: "There is a need to know why Murtaza Bhutto, Hafeez Pirzada, Khaliquzzaman and others left the party?"

Senator Khaliquzzaman, who had revolted against Benazir Bhutto's government during its first tenure and supported Nawaz Sharif's abortive move for a vote of no-confidence, was also present. He was not awarded PPP ticket for 1993 elections.

On the nuclear issue Mr Bhutto said the presure would mount with a "continuing defensive posture".

Extraordinary security measures were taken to prevent his supporters entering the court premises.

Heavy deployment of armed police and army was seen outside the court and pedestrians were not even allowed to walk on the foot-path along the US Consulate and the State Guest House.

These measures were taken in view of Dec 4 incidents in and around the court and Thursday's violence in which at least 10 vehicles were burnt and three persons were killed, allegedly by Murtaza Bhutto's supporters.

Mr Bhutto denied involvement of his supporters in the violence, and pointed out that even the name of his spokesman, Suhail Majeed, was included in it although he was out of the country for about two weeks in connection with the treatment of his wife.

He was very much concerned about the delay in the framing of charges against him, and said, "this is unfair."•

Budget Figures, Economic Data Reported

BK1312101793 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 12 Dec 93 p 13

[Text] Karachi—The fiscal policy has been one of the weakest areas of economic management in the recent past. Persistent large budget deficits, financed mainly by bank borrowings, had created a liquidity overhang that contributed to demand pressures.

According to SBP [State Bank of Pakistan] annual report for the year 1992-93 the rise in fiscal imbalances in recent years shot up from a little over Rs. [rupees] 66 billion in 1989-90 to nearly twice that figure in absolute terms in 1992-93 Rs. 107.7 billion which is attributable to several factors.

An unremitting increase in current expenditure is a marked feature of the fiscal landscape. This is mainly due to large outlays for defense (averaging about one-third of the total) necessitated by geopolitical environment and sharply higher interest payments (accounting for another one-fourth).

Interest payments increased from Rs. 50 billion 1990-91 to Rs. 82 billion in 1992-93, a rise of almost 65 per cent over a 3-year period, due, among other factors, to Government borrowing at market- related rates.

Development expenditure included in the budget rose at a slower rate from Rs. [figure indistinct] billion in 1989-90 to Rs. 75.4 billion, apparently declining as a percentage of GDP. However, when account is taken of the autonomous bodies excluded from the budget coverage in 1992-93, total development expenditure exceeds 8.5 per cent of GDP and compared with 7.2 per cent in 1991-92 on the basis of a consistent definition.

Another major weakness of the budget is the inelasticity of the revenue structure. Despite significant discretionary measures taken over the years tax revenue increased from Rs. 119 billon to only Rs. 180 billion over the four-year period ending 1992-93 with the tax/GDP ratio showing no improvement. In this context of inflexible current expenditure and a relatively inelastic revenue structure, the financing needs of the budget have been increasingly met through borrowings resulting in a fast increase in the volume of outstanding debt and debt servicing liabilities of the Government.

At the end of 1992-93, domestic debt stood at 44.3 per cent of GDP and external debt at 41.8 per cent. Domestic interest payments constituted 24 per cent of the current expenditure in 1992-93 while external debt servicing amounted to 21.5 per cent of exports of goods and services and private transfers.

The gross borrowing of the public sector reached Rs. 129 billion or almost 9.5 per cent of GDP in 1992-93 including borrowing operations of the autonomous corporations, that were excluded from the budget coverage in 1992-93.

A large part of financing requirements have been met from the banking system. Such borrowings for budgetary support amounted to Rs. 63 billion in 1992-93 compared with the budget estimates of Rs. 25 billion. Creation of high powered money through Government bank borrowing should have caused sharp credit expansion.

However, the credit multiplier has remained constrained due to quantitative restrictions on bank credit extended to the non-governmental sector and by high liquidity ratio applied to the banks which made the banks "captive" holders of government securities.

Notwithstanding this constraint, private sector also became quite expansionary in 1992-93 for the first time in many years. While a part of the increase in private sector credit reflected reclassification of claims previously recorded under the residual category ("other items, net"), an important portion related to credit provided under various government sponsored schemes.

In fact, one-fourth of the expansion in private sector credit was attributable to the concessionary financing of transport sector. Since this had an almost 100 per cent foreign exchange component much of the credit expansion associated with this scheme resulted in a substantial decline in the net foreign assets of the banking system.

Net domestic assets rose by 24.3 per cent in 1992-93, under the combined impact of high level of public sector borrowing and a sharp increase in credit to the private sector. Despite the contractionary impact emanating from the foreign sector, domestic liquidity expanded by 18.7 per cent at a time when growth in the real economy fell to less than one-half of its trend rate of about 6 per cent. Given the cummulative effect of successive large injections of liquidity into the economy over the preceding several years, the income velocity of money inevitably declined; it fell at a much faster rate in 1992-93 to 2.52 from 2.81 in 1991-92 and 2.95 in 1990-91, the report said.

Given large budget deficit and its financing through the banking system pressures on the price level continued and the balance of payments deteriorated further in 1992-93. The GDP deflator rose by 9.6 per cent in 1992-93 and the Consumer Price Index by 9.3 per cent.

It may be pointed out that recorded inflation is underreported due to technical deficiencies of price indices. With prices in the outside world rising at a slower rate, the maintenance of export competitiveness had required a depreciation of the nominal exchange rate to prevent an appreciation in real effective terms.

The trade account recorded a deficit of $3.1 billion in 1992-93 as compared with $2.2 billion in 1991-92. Apart from the spill-over of excess demand to foreign sector several factors contributed to the deterioration in trade account in 1992-93. Export performance was affected by reduced supply of cotton entailing damage caused by floods and 'leaf curl' virus.

Continued international recession was yet another factor. Substantial increase in imports reflected the import of motor vehicles and other imports necessitated by damage caused by floods. Terms of trade deteriorated by 2.6 per cent. The 1.8 per cent decline in export unit value index was accompanied by a rise of 0.8 per cent in the import unit value index.

The deficit on the trade account was accenuated by a 19.2 per cent deterioration in the services account. This mainly resulted from higher payments for freight, interest, and travel as well as slowdown in the residents' foreign currency deposits reflected in 18.4 per cent decline in the net inflow of private unrequired transfers.

As a result of these developments, current account deficit widened from $1.1 billion in 1991-92 to $2.98 bilion in 1992-93 and foreign exchange reserves declined by $551 million between end-june, 1992 and end-June, 1993.

Army Conducts Exercise in Punjab

BK1212144093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 12 Dec 93

[Text] The ongoing army exercise, Al-Khalid II, has entered a crucial stage with defensive forces launching a counteroffensive against the enemy. The exercise began a week back in the plains of the Punjab to test different operational concepts. Members of the press were briefed in detail about the ongoing operation. They were told that, as in all exercises, a hypothetical scenario is created to inject realism into the operation. To train the troops under exact conditions, the odds were deliberately heightened against them. Friendly foreign military delegations are also witnessing the exercise.

Sri Lanka

Differences Between General, Government Increase

BK1312133893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1234 GMT 13 Dec 93

[Text] Colombo, Dec 13 (AFP)—Differences between out-going army chief Cecil Waidyaratne and the Sri Lankan government widened Monday [13 December] with the top general saying that disagreements contributed to his early retirement.

Lieutenant General Waidyaratne, 55, said the government of President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga disregarded his recommendation and extended the services of his deputy, Gerry de Silva, who is widely tipped to be the next army chief.

"I was against the extension because that would have blocked several others who are waiting to come up," Waidyaratne told AFP.

Gerry de Silva, who holds the rank of major general, was to retire at the end of this year but was given another year with additional powers over combat troops in the island's north following a major military debacle in November.

Waidyaratne told a local newspaper Monday that he took "sole responsibility" for the November 11 rout of the northern Poonervn military camp where some 650 soldiers were killed or went missing after a Tamil Tiger guerrilla assault.

Waidyaratne submitted his retirement papers to quit by the end of the month. He was appointed army chief in November 1991 and was originally due to retire in May next year.

The army has suffered its worst spell at the hands of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the past two years, losing virtually the entire armouries in at least four camps in the north of the country.

However, Waidyaratne had been widely credited with successfully putting down a violent uprising by anti-government Sinhalese militants between 1988 and 1990.

There had been a bitter power struggle among moderates and hardliners in the military on what strategy to adopt against the LTTE which has been battling to establish an independent Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka's northeast since 1972.

Waidyaratne was criticised recently by the media for his alleged threats against a columnist of a weekend newspaper. But the army in a statement Monday denied the allegations.

The statement also denied that Waidyaratne had referred to the army as a failing one. The army commander "denies that he ever referred to the Sri Lanka army as having failed," it said.

Editorial on Need To Resolve Ethnic Conflict

BK1112131393 Colombo VIRAKESARI in Tamil 26 Nov 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Unnecessary Rumors"]

[Text] People have lost their peace amid rumors that are emanating as a result of the disturbing atmosphere which prevails throughout the country. There has been some tumult in the political arena as it not clear whether the current problem is ethnic conflict or terrorism.

We cannot accept the government's contention that terrorism is the major problem in the country today. It is actually ethnic conflict, which should be resolved politically. Colonel Anurutha Ratawate, the Member of Parliament belonging to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party [SLFP], has said with cool composure that the peace-loving Tamil people should be granted a proper solution.

The Central Executive Committee meeting of the SLFP has stressed the need to find a political solution to the outstanding ethnic confict and has expressed the willingness of opposition parties to review any solution proposed in this regard. It was also decided that all opposition parties led by the SLFP should come foward to launch a countrywide campaign exerting pressure on the government to find a political solution to the ethnic conflict or resign.

This is an occasion for the government and the opposition to adopt concrete measures at the national-level to resolve the ethnic conflict amid the prevailing political crisis today.

The armed forces are experiencing heavy losses due to the latest military operations and the resultant casualties. The armed forces have suffered loss of life on one side and Tamil youths on the other. The country has become a graveyard because of the heavy casualties resulting from the continuing shortsighted political activities and decisions of the politicians, who do not have any concern for the welfare of the people and whose only aim is elections. To remedy this situation, the politicians should nurture a national concept and have the maturity to realize the fact that this country is a multiethnic one.

With the view being fostered that the Sinhalese people will oppose the merger of the north and the east, there have been attempts in the recent past to distract the process of the total devolution of powers and sabotage the already merged provinces and the powers granted to them under the Indo-Sri Lanka accord. With a view to pacifying only the Sinhalese people, Former President J.R. Jayewardene granted separate provincial council status to provinces besides the Northern and Eastern provinces, which sought devolution of powers.

In a statement that suits the current situation, Parliamentarian K. Navaratnam has stated that if there is the view that the Sinhalese people will oppose the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces, barring the Western province, the six provinces can be converted into three provinces by merging two into one. As the Western province is large, it can be allowed to function independently.

The country is becoming vulnerable due to the ethnic conflict. People have lost their peace of mind and are suffering as a result. Politicians are passing the time in anticipation of elections. As long as no effort is made to think together, irrespective of ethnic considerations, to save people from this wretched condition, there will only be an environment of death, devastation, and rumors for people to live in and their very purpose of living will be defeated.